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DEVELOPING PARTICIPATION THROUGH PROJECTS?

A CASE STUDY FROM THE HELSINKI METROPOLITAN AREA

Kanerva Kuokkanen

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Since the 1990s, social scientists in Western countries have noticed a shift in policy-making towards networks and the involvement of civil society and market actors, usually referred to as governance. The governance approach has gone hand in hand with the development of more participatory and deliberative forms of action both in research and in the work of policy-makers and practitioners. Even though a number of scholars emphasise the participatory and deliberative potentials of governance and the role that elected politicians play in “metagovernance”, governance can still be seen as a risk to the basic principles and institutions of representative democracy. Further, governance research has seldom acknowledged that in practice, governance arrangements are often put into practice through projects and related fixed-term policy instruments and organisation forms.

The main interest in this study is *what happens to citizen participation when it is developed through projects*. The research questions concern the relationship between projects and the broader framework of governance and metagovernance; the main issues in the development of participation in municipalities and especially in metropolitan governance; the role of participation itself when it becomes a development object; and the relationship between projects and the permanent municipal administration. This research addresses these themes through a case study, a project named Citizen Channel which aimed to find and test various forms of citizen participation in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The project was part of a multi-actor development programme, the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Methodologically, this study belongs to a broader research tradition of interpretive policy analysis. By concentrating on three actor groups – the high-level officials of the Urban Programme, the Citizen Channel project administration and the participants in the project – this study aims to present a nuanced understanding of the development of participation through projects.

From the perspective of *governance and metagovernance*, this study shows that strategic steering – the most important form of metagovernance in the context of programmes and projects – is a relatively loose framework that allows various interpretations of the leading strategies at project level. The Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project brought together a variety of working logics, interests and actors. The Urban Programme was primarily centred on creating consensus and collaboration between the cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, previously in competition with each other; the Citizen Channel project administration concentrated on the development of participation; and the neighbourhood association activists and librarians participating in the project emphasised concrete local issues and the creation of new networks.

The main motivations for the *development of participation* at the municipal level are issues of local democracy, the residents' experience-based knowledge, and the development of public administration, although actors working with the development of participation see a number of challenges. The main driver for metropolitan forms of participation which transcend municipal boundaries is the "metropolitan dimension of everyday life" for residents, which is independent of administrative borders. In the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, a specific problem in the development of metropolitan participation is the different administrative cultures and forms of resident participation within each municipality.

The development of participation *through projects* can from a pessimistic perspective lead to the instrumentalisation of participation. A new group of professionals in participation has arisen, and participatory projects concentrate on creating generalizable and transferable models. For the participants in such projects, there is relatively little room for manoeuvre and little continuity after the project has ended. Moreover, projects may be a way to outsource the issue of participation to NGOs and projects so that it has no impact on the permanent organisations of municipal administration.

From an optimistic perspective, the development of participation means new scope for NGOs and other local development actors that implement participatory projects and act as intermediary organisations between the public administration and the grassroots level and between short-term projects and long-term development work. Projects support the basic values of these actors and give them the opportunity to provide alternative ways of thinking in public administration and promote the issue of participation in it. Even though individual projects end, they lead to tacit results such as networks and new forms of action at the local level. Finally, even though the impact of individual projects may be limited, the "metaproject" formed by simultaneous and sequential projects can gradually effect an impact on the permanent administration. In general, the "participatory turn" of public administration has been intensifying at least until recently. At the same time, there has been a parallel development of citizen- and association-based initiatives, networks and new forms of action outside public institutions.

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1 DEVELOPING PARTICIPATION THROUGH PROJECTS? AN INTRODUCTION

During the last two decades, the social science literature on governance has tried to capture the increasingly networked and interactive nature of policy-making (e.g. Kooiman 1993b, Pierre 2000, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Sørensen & Torfing 2007d, Bevir 2011c). At the same time, discussion on governance has been intertwined with the so-called “participatory turn” of public administration and the theoretical and practical quest for developing more participatory and/or deliberative forms of democracy (e.g. Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Saurugger 2010). However, it is seldom noted in the research that a significant part of networking and development is taking place through projects and related temporally limited policy instruments and forms of organisation (Sjöblom 2009). In this context, it is also the case that citizen participation is to a growing extent being developed through projects.

The main interest in this study is *what happens to issue participation when it is developed through projects* – how participatory projects relate to a broader framework of governance; what the main issues in the development of participation are; what happens to participation itself when it becomes a development object; and how short-term development projects relate to regular municipal administration. This study addresses these themes through a case study, by concentrating on the development of participation in a specific project in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area which can be situated in a broader framework of urban policy and metropolitan governance. In this introductory chapter, we will look first at the themes of the study before moving onto the research questions and the structure of the research.

1.1 GOVERNANCE, THE “PARTICIPATORY TURN” AND THE PROJECTIFICATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Since the 1990s, social scientists in Western countries (in particular, in Western Europe) have noticed a shift in public policy-making towards networks, partnerships and the involvement of civil society and market actors (e.g. Kooiman 1993b, Pierre 2000, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Sørensen & Torfing 2007d, Bevir 2011c). This network-oriented approach seems to at least partly supplement the earlier ideas of New Public Management, which concentrated primarily on privatisation and the use of market-based policy instruments (Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Osborne 2010, Skelcher et al. 2013). In the literature, researchers have used the concept of governance – often with a prefix such as “collaborative”, “new”, “network”, “interactive” or “participatory” – when they refer to a shift towards a more networked way of

formulating and implementing public policies and steering society, based on “soft” forms of steering, various forms of cooperation and negotiation, the blurring of sectoral boundaries and a multitude of actors who represent not only the public sector but also the market and/or civil society (e.g. Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Ansell & Gash 2008, Osborne 2010, Bevir 2011a).

The discourse behind the adoption of new forms of governance is twofold, emphasising on the one hand the search for effectiveness in the implementation of public policy, and on the other issues of democracy and participation (e.g. Andersen & van Kempen 2001, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007). Especially recently, governance has been intertwined with the “participatory turn” (e.g. Saurugger 2010) or the development of more participatory and/or deliberative forms of democracy both in the theoretical literature and the concrete work of policy-makers, practitioners and researchers (the theories of participatory and deliberative democracy will be addressed in more detail in Chapter 2.3). However, the relation between networked and collaborative forms of governance and democracy is ambivalent. Even if several scholars emphasise the participatory and deliberative potential of networked and collaborative forms of governance, these can also be seen as problematic from the perspective of the basic principles and institutions of representative democracy. (See e.g. Sørensen 2005, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Kübler & Schwab 2007, Skelcher et al. 2013, Torfing & Triantafyllou 2011b.) Although the relationship between governance and democracy has risen up the research agenda during the last decade, there are still many open questions concerning the issues of democracy and metagovernance – the governance of governance by elected politicians (Bever 2011a, Bever & Rhodes 2011, Skelcher et al. 2013).

Moreover, the general research on governance has seldom concentrated on the fact that, in practice, many of the collaborative and interactive governance arrangements are put into effect through projects and related fixed-term policy instruments and forms of organisation (Sjöblom et al. 2006, 2012, Sulkunen 2006, Jensen et al. 2007, 2013, Pinson 2009). Equally, the “participatory turn” of public policies or the development of citizen participation by public authorities and other actors closely related to them has been characterised by a proliferation of participatory projects and, more precisely, by changes in the nature of participation itself – or rather the purpose of participation in the policy process and the role of the participants in it – as it becomes something that is developed through projects. This issue has nevertheless been neglected by the current literature on participatory and deliberative democracy and democratic innovations, as well as by the more technical project literature.

The main interest in this study is what happens to citizen participation when it is developed through projects – how participatory projects relate to a broader framework of governance; what the main issues in the development of participation are; what happens to participation itself when it becomes a development object; and how short-term development projects relate to

regular municipal administration. This study addresses these questions through a case study, by concentrating on the development of participation through a specific project in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area which is situated in the broader framework of the urban policies and the metropolitan governance of the region. In earlier literature, urban governance and urban policies (together with some other policy fields such as regional and environmental policy) have been seen as key examples of the new forms of multi-actor and collaborative governance (Le Galès 2002, Brenner 2004, Pinson 2009, Skelcher et al. 2013). At the same time, they are emblematic of “projectification” and it has even been stated that projects have become the main instrument of governance in cities (Pinson 2009, cf. Kuokkanen 2005, Vranken 2005, Forssell et al. 2013).

The case study in this research consists of two parts. I concentrate on a special participatory project named Citizen Channel, which aimed to find and test various forms of citizen participation and interaction between citizens and the public administration in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. However, the project itself was part of multi-actor policy programme called the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, which aimed to increase the international competitiveness of the area and create new forms of action and collaboration. By analysing the relation between the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project, this study aims to elucidate broader forms of metagovernance and the ways in which the strategic objectives at programme level are interpreted at project level, both by the project administration and by the actual participants in the project.

As was noted above, the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project can also be situated in a broader framework of urban policies and metropolitan governance. The issue of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region has been a conflictual issue both nationally and locally. This study took place in a period of programme- and project based metropolitan development, and during recent years, there has been a growing pressure coming from state level towards more institutionalised forms of metropolitan governance (see Chapter 3.2). However, analysis of the era of programme-based development yields information about how the foundations were laid for further metropolitan collaboration. Moreover, the analysis of the development of metropolitan participation in the Citizen Channel project is interesting. Even if the issue of democracy has to some extent been present in the metropolitan governance literature – for instance, through the establishment of elected metropolitan boards, broad governance networks or the strengthening of neighbourhood-level decision-making (see e.g. Booth & Jouve 2005, Kübler & Heinelt 2005, Kübler & Schwab 2007, Jarva & Palonen 2012) – the question of direct forms of metropolitan participation and in particular the issue of participatory metropolitan projects has been studied very little.

Methodologically, this study belongs to a broader research tradition of interpretive policy analysis which has in earlier research been seen as particularly useful in the analysis of multi-actor governance (e.g. Hajer &

Wagenaar 2003b). Similarly, inside governance a group of scholars has sketched a research agenda for a third generation of governance studies, which would continue with the themes of democracy and metagovernance, but take into account the openings of critical research, the contextual nature of governance (Skelcher et al. 2013) and the importance of interpretive methods in analysing it (Bevir & Rhodes 2011). By concentrating on the three actor groups – the high-level officials of the Urban Programme, the project administration which was conducting the participatory Citizen Channel project and the participants in the project – this study aims to demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the development of participation through projects. The next subchapter will consist of the precise research questions in this study, together with a presentation of the structure of the research.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND STRUCTURE

This Ph.D. Thesis is based on an analysis of a specific participatory project named “Citizen Channel”, the aim of which was to test and model different forms of citizen participation and interaction between citizens, municipal officials and politicians. The project was part of a policy programme, The Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area 2005–2007, which formed the broader institutional framework and which will be also considered in this study. The programme and the project are both situated within the framework of Finnish urban and metropolitan governance. My research questions concern the following themes:

Governance: What forms of governance and metagovernance are used in programme- and project-based urban and metropolitan development? Do the actor groups involved (programme administration, project administration, project participants) have different interpretations of the aims of the programme/ project and their roles in it?

Participation: What are the central issues in the development of participation by the public administration and closely related actors at the local level and, more specifically, in the field of metropolitan participation?

Projectification: What happens when participation becomes the object of development projects? What are the effects of such a development on the implementation of public policies, on the roles of the various actors and, ultimately, on participation itself?

Regarding all the above points, is there support for a pessimistic or optimistic perspective (as presented in the earlier literature on governance and democracy) with regard to the development of participation through projects in the context of Finnish metropolitan governance?

The structure of the Ph.D. Thesis is as follows: Chapter 1 consists of an introduction to the study. In Chapter 2 I will look at the existing literature on governance, democracy and projectification, the special field of urban policies and metropolitan governance, and the framework that these components constitute for this particular study. Chapter 3 consists of a presentation of the context for this study: the Finnish political and administrative system and the issue of participation in this context, together with Finnish urban policy and the special question of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region. In Chapter 4, I will present the methodological framework of the study: first, a general overview of interpretive policy analysis and second, the data, methods and operationalisations employed in this study.

The empirical analysis starts in Chapter 5 and follows the order of the research questions. In Chapter 5, I concentrate on the governance of the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project – the latter both from the perspective of the project administration and the participants of the project. In this chapter, I will look at the main objectives, actors and forms of action of the programme, but also at the metagovernance of the entity from high-level strategy down to project level. In Chapter 6, I will concentrate on the development of participation both as a general phenomenon especially at the local level and as a part of the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region. In Chapter 7, I will analyse the Citizen Channel project as an example of the development of participation through projects. This includes an analysis of the role of the project administration and the participants in the project as well as a consideration of the impact and continuity of such projects. Finally, Chapter 8 consists of the conclusions of this study.

2 GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRATIC THEORY AND PROJECTIFICATION

In social sciences, the concept of governance arose in the 1990s as an attempt to capture the networked and multi-actor logic of policy-making. However, since the early governance studies, new research questions have arisen. Especially during the last decade, the research on governance and democracy has proliferated and intertwined with the “participatory turn” in both research and public policy (see e.g. Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Warren 2009, Saurugger 2010, Keränen 2014). However, networked and collaborative forms of governance have led to open questions from a democratic perspective. One under-researched issue both in governance studies and, more specifically, in the field of democratic innovation is that governance and the development of participation often take place through projects and other temporally limited policy instruments and forms of organisation. Finally, urban governance has been a policy field where networked forms of governance, projects and participatory initiatives have been especially prominent. These aspects – and the framework that they provide for this study – are presented in this chapter.

2.1 DEFINING GOVERNANCE

Governance is a concept which has been widely used in social sciences since the 1990s, marking a shift in the way in which public policy is conducted. The word “governance” has its etymological background in the Greek word *kubernân* (to pilot or steer), as does the word “government” (Kjaer 2004, 3). Before, both words were used as synonyms, but governance research has made a clear distinction between the two concepts (Stoker 1998, 17). A typical phrase in the governance research of the 1990s was a “shift from government to governance” or conceptually, a clear separation between “governance” and “government”. Here, government referred to a more centralised, hierarchical system based on the public sector and a linear chain of command, and governance to a more networked way of formulating and implementing public policy and steering society, based on cooperation, negotiation, the blurring of sectoral boundaries and a multitude of actors representing not only the public sector but also the market and/or civil society (e.g. Kooiman 1993a, Rhodes 1996, Stoker 1998, Pierre & Peters 2000, Hirst 2000, Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Bevir 2011a).

Two aspects have remained at the centre of research since the “first generation governance studies” of the 1990s (Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Skelcher et al. 2013a). These are, first, an emphasis on multi-actor networks and, second, their use as an indicator of a broader change in political steering. However, the research has become more nuanced and the research agenda has

broadened since the early studies. Even if it has become generally accepted inside the research community that in political steering, there has been a “a shift from governance through hierarchy to governance via markets and latterly networks” (Skelcher et al. 2013, 1, see also Osborne 2010, 1), a clear-cut shift “from government to governance” and the idea of networks as “governing without government” (Rhodes 1996), presented by some of the early governance scholars have both been questioned. More recent definitions of governance have tried to further specify the concept of governance with a number of prefixes. These include for instance “New Public Governance” (Osborne 2010), “network governance” (Sørensen & Torfing 2007d, Davies 2011), “collaborative governance” (Ansell & Gash 2008, Bingham 2011), “interactive governance” (Kooiman 2010, Torfing et al. 2012), or, when the participation of the civil society is emphasised, “participatory governance” (Grote & Gbikpi 2002). The aim of all these largely overlapping concepts is to capture the networked, multi-actor, negotiable and flexible character of policy-making.

There are various meanings attached to the word “governance” (see Hirst 2000, Rhodes 1996, 2000, van Kersbergen & van Waarden 2004). This extends to studies on urban and metropolitan governance, as there is a considerable confusion in the use of the concept to refer to both a general form of governing and a special theory of networked and multi-actor steering (see e.g. DiGaetano & Strom 2003). The way in which governance is understood in this study is based on the premises described below, which, in turn, are drawn from existing governance research in political science, public administration and, to a lesser extent, urban studies (see e.g. Hirst 2000, Le Galès 2002, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Jensen et al. 2007, Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Pinson 2009, Bevir 2011a, Skelcher et al. 2013).

First, governance refers to a multitude of actors that represent the public sector, the market and civil society, who operate in joint networks which are based on interdependence and negotiation and used in the sphere of public policies policy (cf. Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, 9). The actual composition of these networks can vary. The concept of collaborative, network or interactive governance has generally covered relatively broad multi-actor networks instead of simple public-public networks or very narrow public-private partnerships, but a clear delimitation is difficult.

Second, governance relates to processes of change in the political steering conducted by the state and in the relations between the state and the local level. Even if a clear-cut shift “from government to governance” can be questioned, this research is based on the presupposition that there has been a growing emphasis on collaborative, networked and interactive forms of policy-making, especially inside certain policy fields since the 1990s. At the same time, the literature on urban governance shows that these dynamics are linked to changing relations between the state and the local level (Brenner 2004, Le Galès 2002, Pinson 2009). However, collaborative forms of governance operate in a complex public policy environment where different forms of

working logic find themselves in interaction with each other (Le Galès 2005, Skelcher et al. 2013, Bevir 2011a, 2).

Third, the notion of network is central, but in itself insufficient to capture the concrete policy instruments and forms of organisation through which collaborative and networked forms of governance are conducted in practice. This issue is put forward by scholars dealing with the use of projects – working in interaction with a related family of programmes, partnerships, funds and evaluations – as central to the concept of governance (Sulkunen 2006, Pinson 2009, Sjöblom et al. 2013).

Fourth, governance is related to changing forms of participation and democracy. Even if the concept of governance may in some cases refer to relatively narrow forms of public-private partnerships which do not include direct citizen participation, the working logic of governance is nevertheless based on partnerships, the inclusion of actors from outside the public sector, a stakeholder approach and a more “relational” view of democracy (Skelcher et al. 2013, 1–9, see also Häikiö & Leino 2014c). At the same time, governance shares much in common with the ongoing “participatory turn” in public administration and it is related to the ongoing processes of creating democratic innovations by public authorities and other related actors (see e.g. Fung & Wright 2001, Sørensen 2005, Pinson 2009, Warren 2009, Skelcher et al. 2013, Keränen 2014). However, the networked and multi-actor character of governance leads to open questions from the perspective of representative democracy. In previous research, governance arrangements have been seen as posing a risk to the institutions of representative democracy and its basic values, such as accountability, transparency, representation and legitimacy. From a more positive point of view, representative institutions still have considerable power, and governance has only meant a change in political steering towards strategic steering and metagovernance or “the governance of governance” by elected politicians. (See Sørensen 2007, Pinson 2009, Peters 2010, Skelcher et al. 2013.)

2.2 THE BACKGROUND OF GOVERNANCE RESEARCH

Governance research can be seen as emanating from a variety of sources. On the one hand, even if a clear-cut shift from government to governance can be questioned, a network-, partnership- and project-based approach has arisen in a number of policy fields. Existing governance research has depicted a relatively profound social and political change and in doing so, often even implied even a certain normative undertone. Scientifically, even if governance research is sometimes presented as a novel research field that arose in the 1990s, it can also be situated inside a broader research framework in political science and public administration (Sørensen and Torfing (2007a, 3; see also Klijn 1997). Here, the role of the different generations of governance studies that have emerged since the early 1990s must be acknowledged.

2.2.1 SOCIETAL CHANGE AND NORMATIVE ASSUMPTIONS

Governance literature paints a fairly general portrait of profound change in Western countries. The aim of this subchapter is to present this overall picture. Even if the existence of a phenomenon called “governance” has been criticised (e.g. Davies 2011), this study is based on the assumption that, especially in certain policy fields such as urban and regional policy (see Chapters 2.5 and 3.2), there is empirical evidence about the widespread use of multi-actor networks, partnerships, projects and to some extent, citizen participation or at least a rhetoric of participation. Urban governance in particular has experienced several general trends that can be traced in numerous western European countries and cities (see Brenner 2004, Kuokkanen 2005, Kazepov 2005b, van den Berg et al. 2007b, Pinson 2009). However, this study is based on the assumptions that actual governance arrangements are more nuanced than the literature presupposes and differ according to context, and that the proliferation of governance has arisen as the consequence of a particular political logic and rationale and certain presuppositions about its effects. Proponents describe governance as an effective, proactive form of political steering – while critical scholars, as will be noted later in this subchapter, view it as part of a process of neoliberalisation.

The political reasoning behind the introduction of new forms of governance is twofold: on the one hand, the quest for effectiveness in public policies and on the other, the need to strengthen democracy and to introduce new forms of participation (Sørensen 2005, Sørensen & Torfing 2007b, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007). Even if governance scholars see increasing trust in the public sector when compared with the market-based reforms of the 1980s and 1990s (Kickert et al. 1997, 1), the basic assumption is that in the current social, political and economic situation, the public sector is not capable of acting alone and has to create links to external actors (e.g. Kooiman 1993a, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Sørensen & Torfing 2007a). These assumptions have been taken on by many of the academics working in the field.

In governance research, the main drivers of governance relate to networking, collaboration and flexibility (e.g. Sørensen & Torfing 2007b, 95). However, the stated effectiveness and efficiency of governance arrangements have in earlier research been viewed in a variety of ways (Sørensen & Torfing 2007b, Kuokkanen 2009). Governance can be seen in its most narrow form as the outsourcing of public services to non-public actors from the third sector and market and to multi-actor networks (Pierre & Peters 2000, Bevir 2011a, Skelcher et al. 2013). Or, as Gerry Stoker (1998, 21) puts it, one interpretation of the governance perspective is that it, “draws to our attention a shift in responsibility, a stepping back of the state and a concern to push responsibilities onto the private and voluntary sectors and, more broadly, the citizen” (for similar findings from project research, see Sulkunen 2006). Another related perspective in governance research emphasises the role of governance networks as mechanisms for coordinating resources – such as capital, personnel, knowledge, ideas and authority – from various actors, and

highlights the synergies produced by such coordination (Sørensen & Torfing 2007b; cf. Kooiman 1993a).

In a large part of the research, governance is seen as a way for the public sector to cope in socio-political environments which are characterised by complexity, by pluralisation, and by new spatial, temporal and sectoral dynamics (Kooiman 1993a, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Sørensen and Torfing 2007a, Pinson 2009, Warren 2009). In this context, *complexity* is often related to the emergence of “wicked” policy problems, characterised by unclear and contextual understandings of the nature of a problem, the effects of the possible solutions and potential conflicts between stakeholders (Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Skelcher & Torfing 2010; see also Rittel & Webber 1973). In a similar tone, other governance scholars have emphasised the radical uncertainty of policy-making and the need to cope with emerging risks (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, 9–10, Pinson 2009, 309–328, Skelcher & Torfing 2010).

Consequently, scholars have emphasised the importance of joint problem-solving with a variety of actors (Kooiman 1993a, Andersen & van Kempen 2001, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Sørensen and Torfing 2007b, Wagenaar 2007). The common denominator for the economic and joint problem-solving approaches is that both refer to resource dependencies between actors for resources such as capital, personnel, knowledge, ideas and authority (e.g. Kooiman 1993a, Sjöblom 2006a, 18, Sørensen and Torfing 2007b, 98–99). What is understood as relevant knowledge in governance research has come to encompass different kinds of knowledge, including the local and experience-based knowledge of lay citizens (see e.g. Healey 2006, Wagenaar 2007, Pinson 2009). Another important element in the literature is the role of governance in the creation of innovations, new forms of action and alternative solutions (Fung & Wright 2001, Moore & Hartley 2010, Sørensen 2012). This is related not only to the multi-actor nature of governance, but also to the use of flexible and targeted policy instruments such as projects, which are said to allow greater opportunities for experimentation than a hierarchical administration would permit (Sjöblom 2006a, Jensen et al. 2007).

Pluralisation in governance research relates to the growing number of different groups in society, to an emphasis on individual and direct forms of participation, and to the appeal to identity politics (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Warren 2009). These developments primarily relate to arguments that interactive and collaborative forms of governance include new forms of participation, deliberation and stakeholder mobilisation. In the literature, participation and deliberation are also linked to the effectiveness of governance and there is a constant interaction between these two lines of reasoning (Börzel & Panke 2007, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007). However, the relationship between governance and democracy is ambivalent and from a pessimistic perspective, governance is seen as posing a threat to the basic principles and institutions of representative democracy and as favouring elitist forms of participation. This theme will be addressed more thoroughly in Chapter 2.3.

New sectoral, spatial and temporal dynamics form the third element often present in governance research (Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, 5; see also Le Galès 2002, Brenner 2004, Pinson 2009), even if it is unclear whether they are a driver or rather a consequence of the new forms of governance. From the perspective of sectoral dynamics, governance is seen as the interconnection of actors and the blurring of sectoral boundaries. This occurs both horizontally, inside the sectorised and specialised public administration and between the public sector, private sector and civil society, and vertically, between the various levels of administration (e.g. Jensen et al. 2007, Sørensen and Torfing 2007a). From a spatial perspective, across a range of governance arrangements there exists a strong tendency towards decentralisation. Research on regional, urban and rural policies has emphasised a shift in responsibilities, whereby national, redistributive policies are increasingly replaced by activity at the local level, local networks and policies based on local strengths and specialisations, and the birth of new levels of action, such as the metropolitan or the neighbourhood (Le Galès 2002, Brenner 2004, Atkinson 2007, Pinson 2009). However, the different administrative and spatial levels remain interconnected, and research on multi-level governance in particular has emphasised the interaction between the different levels of administration running from the EU level through national to local levels (e.g. Hooghe & Marks 2001, Giersig 2008). From a temporal perspective, researchers refer to the changing and interconnecting time frames of policies. There is a relationship between governance and the growing use of temporal policy instruments, such as programmes and projects, which have limited time frames (see Chapter 2.4).

Researchers are not unanimous about the relationship between governance and political ideologies. According to some scholars, governance is a “post-political” phenomenon, which means that it is not linked to political ideologies or that it transcends the traditional ideological boundaries between Left and Right (Hirst 2000; however, in some analyses, post-political is used as a broad concept which refers to the symbolic nature of participation and the erasure of political conflict, see e.g. Paddison 2009). Projects in particular are seen as encompassing a number of objectives by both (new) Left and Right, from demands for freedom, individuality and participation, to flexibility, effectiveness and efficiency (Boltanski & Chiapello 1999). At the same time, they create a common framework for cultural and economic elites (Pinson 2009, 34). Current governance research is largely based on the premise that governance is different both from hierarchies and from markets and that its working logic is based on networks rather than on privatisation and market-based policy instruments (Kickert et al. 1997, 1, Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, 2, Skelcher et al. 2013, 1). Moreover, several governance researchers explicitly take a critical stance towards both the neoliberal ideology and/or New Public Management (Kickert et al. 1997, 3, Le Galès 2002, 14, Kjaer 2004, 10).

However, many critical scholars see governance as the continuation of New Public Management (NPM) reforms and as having its roots in neoliberalism.

What is emphasised by the critical scholars is that the introduction of new forms of governance is not only a reaction to socio-political trends, but also a result of explicit political decisions. Researchers of urban governance in particular are divided on this question (see also Chapter 2.5). According to scholars sometimes labelled as neostructuralists (Giersig 2008) or neomarxists (Pinson 2009), governance arrangements and new urban policies represent neoliberalism or, at least, an ongoing process of neoliberalisation, backed by political decisions at the national level and by international institutions which have their background in neoliberal ideology (Brenner & Theodore 2002, Brenner 2004, Geddes 2005, Davies 2011). On the other hand, scholars sometimes labelled as neo-Weberians (Giersig 2008, Pinson 2009) see urban governance in European cities as having a firm foundation in the legacy of the welfare state, and even serving to defend the local welfare state in a context where the central state is in retreat (Bagnasco & Le Galès 2000, Le Galès 2002, Pinson 2009).

According to Pierre and Peters (2000, 55–56, 65), governance partly has its background in the ideological shift towards the market and there is some kinship between the NPM and governance approaches, where the former has probably triggered the latter. According to Pierre and Peters, the similarity between the NPM and governance approaches lies in the argument that the formal-legal state is becoming less important, and more emphasis is being put on more or less temporary institutional arrangements across the public-private border. However, the authors state that the proponents of governance generally have a more positive view of the state as the representative of collective interests and as a facilitator and coordinator of governance. At the same time, recent governance research has been linked with the search for more participatory, deliberative and relational forms of democracy (see Chapter 2.3). In current research, NPM is often seen as a transition phase between a hierarchical, public-sector based public administration and collaborative and networked forms of governance (Osborne 2010, 1, Skelcher et al. 2013, 1).

In the current situation, New Public Management in public administration has to a growing extent been replaced by what the researchers call “New Public Governance” (NPG). If in NPM the emphasis was primarily on the privatisation of public services, the use of market-based policy instruments and a consumerist approach towards citizens, NPG is presented as being more strongly geared towards partnerships and collaboration and, especially in the provision of public services, co-production (Fledderus et al. 2014, see also Osborne 2010). Even though the term co-production was coined by Elinor Ostrom and her colleagues back in the 1970s, it has been embraced by the New Public Governance research community and in this context defined as “an arrangement where both clients and ‘regular’ producers contribute a mix of activities at the point of delivery of public services” (Fledderus et al. 2014, 426–427). At the same time, Fledderus et al. (ibid., 425) state that this has broadened the way in which service users are seen when set against the

relatively narrow idea of self-interested consumers presented in New Public Management thinking.

International institutions such as the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development have all had a big impact in spreading and strengthening collaborative and networked forms of governance, such as multi-actor partnerships and stakeholder and civil society participation (Pierre & Peters 2000, 56–60, Brenner 2004, Saurugger 2010). The principles and the working logic of EU policies have been adopted in national policies – especially in the fields of regional, urban, rural and environmental policies (Sjöblom 2006a, Godenhjelm et al. 2012). The proliferation of programmes and projects as governance instruments is strongly influenced by the EU, and for instance the partnership principle of the Structural Fund policy of the European Union has increased the use of partnerships and governance networks at regional and local level (e.g. Godenhjelm et al. 2012). At the same time, new forms of governance have also been carried across and adapted from one sector or country to another. The concept of “policy transfer” (Dolowitz & Marsh 1996) has been used to describe this phenomenon. The widespread adoption of partnerships, programmes, projects and other related governance instruments can be seen as a similar phenomenon to that which Michael Howlett and M. Ramesh (1993) analysed in the case of the privatisation experience of the 1980s, meaning not merely a small-scale adjustment of existing policy instruments, but a step change in the toolkit used by governments which was adopted across many countries and policy sectors at the same time.

The overall picture presented by the governance literature portrays a fairly general shift in Western societies since the 1990s. However, as will be noted in the next subchapter, the generalising tendencies of governance research and overly optimistic aspects of the picture presented by the so-called first generation of governance studies have been questioned in more recent studies. Moreover, although governance research is often presented in the literature as a novel research approach which has risen in reaction to societal and political changes (see Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, 3), the next subchapter presents the scientific background of governance research and its development through successive generations.

2.2.2 TOWARDS A THIRD GENERATION OF GOVERNANCE STUDIES

Scientifically, governance has often been considered as a cross-disciplinary theory or approach, even if different disciplines have slightly different understandings of the concept (for an overview, see e.g. Kersbergen & van Waarden 2004). In my research, I will concentrate on the scientific background of governance research as it is understood in political science, public administration and, to a degree, urban studies (Chapter 2.5 will include a more thorough presentation of urban governance research). According to

Sørensen and Torfing (2007a, 3), the study of governance networks is a new research field founded on the “discovery” of non-hierarchical and multi-actor forms of governance in the early 1990s by three more or less concomitant schools in Britain, Germany and the Netherlands (for an overview, see Enroth 2011). Presented as a novel field that has acquired a powerful position in a short time, governance can be interpreted as a “paradigm shift” in the research (Kuhn 1962). At the same time, governance research to some extent builds on earlier research traditions and is a logical sequel of earlier schools of thought, or in the Kuhnian vocabulary, part of “normal science”.

In one of the early classics of governance literature, Erik-Hans Klijn (1997) traces the background of the research on policy networks to three different research traditions in organisation sociology, political science and policy analysis. First, in organisation sociology, the interorganisational theory of the 1960s and the 1970s focused on relationships and resource dependencies between organisations and on their implementation and coordination strategies. Second, in political science, the antecedents of governance theory can be found in a broad body of research on the relations between the state and pressure groups emanating from the classical elitist–pluralist debate of the 1950s and 1960s. These include the American research on subgovernments or subsystems and its European counterpart on policy communities or policy networks, which describe networks around specific policy areas, as well as the European research on corporatism concentrating on an institutionalised form of interest group mediation. In urban studies, there has been a parallel research tradition on public-private networks, such as the growth machine literature of the 1970s (Molotch 1976) and the regime literature of the 1980s (Stone 1989).

Third, in policy analysis, the questioning of the rationalistic relationship between political decision-making and implementation paved the way for further governance studies. According to Klijn, this started with the models of bounded rationality of the 1950s and continued with the implementation studies of the 1970s and 1980s (e.g. Pressman & Wildavsky 1973). However, the most important change came in the 1970s, when a body of research started to emphasise the role of process in policy-making and the existence of complexity, unpredictability and a variety of actors. The common factor in the research was that it saw public policy as the result of interactions between a number of actors trying to influence the process in directions beneficial to themselves. This was evident with the garbage can models (Cohen et al. 1972), which emphasised the rather arbitrary formation of policies as the result of complex interactions between a range of actors, but also concerned a number of other approaches addressing governmental politics, agenda building and interaction. (Klijn 1997.) In their analysis of the antecedents of governance research, Sørensen and Torfing (2007a, 5) consider the developments in policy analysis as the most important form of research behind governance studies, as they led to the conclusion that all relevant actors must be included in the policy

process. More recently, this has been emphasised in some of the studies in interpretive policy analysis (see Chapter 4.1).

However, the scientific background to governance research is wider than the overview presented above, which concentrates mainly on research on networks. Governance has been closely connected to the restructuring of the (welfare) state and to the state's steering mechanisms (Pierre & Peters 2000, Sulkunen 2006). As scholars of urban governance in particular have stated, networks and projects at micro and meso levels are directly related to the restructuring and rescaling of the state at macro level (Le Galès 2002, Brenner 2004, Pinson 2009). Governance theory has also had parallels in other theories of system-level changes: the post-Fordist debate, which has its background mainly in regulation theory and neomarxist research (Amin 1994), shares a number of similar traits with the governance approach (Jessop 1995, John 2001, Giersig 2008).

At the same time, important aspects of the research on governance and democracy are closely connected to the re-emergence of research emphasising the importance of civil society and to new ground opened up by democratic theory (for a broader overview see Chapter 2.3). The theory of deliberative democracy (and, to some extent, its counter-reactions, see e.g. Mouffe 1993, 2000), the revitalised research on participatory democracy and the research on democratic innovations have all had a big impact on the subfield of governance research which addresses issues of democracy (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Sørensen 2005, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Torfing & Triantafyllou 2011a, Keränen 2014). Partly overlapping with the ideal of deliberative democracy, the “communicative” turn in planning studies and policy analysis has emphasised the importance of involving citizens in the planning and policy process and has had an impact on those current governance studies that concentrate on citizen participation (Fischer & Forester 1993, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Healey 2006). Recent research has also emphasised the need to analyse the role of representative institutions in governance or rather metagovernance (Sørensen & Torfing 2007c, Torfing & Triantafyllou 2011a, Jessop 2011, Sørensen 2007, Skelcher et al. 2013).

According to Sørensen and Torfing (2007a, 14, see also Enroth 2011), the aim of first generation governance studies was to show that governance networks were a new and distinct phenomenon. The early research highlighted a number of areas. First, it showed the widespread usage of governance networks in different countries and policy fields. Second, it underlined differences of governance networks vis-à-vis the state and the market; here, as the “shift from government to governance” indicates, the difference between governance and more hierarchical forms of government based on the public sector was the main point of interest. Third, it drew attention to the contribution of governance networks to the effective and proactive steering of society. Here, scholars pointed to economic efficiency, efforts to seek solutions to policy problems, and the consensual features of governance presented above. Fourth, in a number of studies it addressed the concept of governance

and the various interpretations of it in different research and policy fields (see Rhodes 1996, 2000, Hirst 2000, van Kersbergen & van Waarden 2004).

In practice, the “shift from government to governance” used especially by the first generation scholars is a catchphrase which must be employed with caveats (Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Considine & Afzal 2011, Davies 2011). First, by no means all forms of hierarchical steering are replaced by networks and partnerships, and central and local governments still retain considerable political power. Even at the beginning of the governance debate, governance scholars had different views on the role of the public sector. At one end of the scale, governance was seen as a way for the state to cope in a changing situation (Pierre & Peters 2000; for a newer state-centred approach see Davies 2011), whereas other views emphasised the self-governing nature of governance networks (Rhodes 1996, 2000).

In current research, it is often assumed that networked and interactive forms of governance exist simultaneously with other forms of policy-making and that administrative systems, market mechanisms and third sector organisations form *hybrid* forms of governance (Bevir 2011a, Skelcher et al. 2013). Governance networks are seen to occur “in the shadow of hierarchy” (Héritier & Lehmkuhl 2008; see also Sharpf 1999, 20) or in an “institutional void” next to or across existing state institutions or international treaties (Hajer 2003b, 175). Public actors play an important role in the adoption and steering of new forms of governance and take part in networks and partnerships together with other actors. Research on “metagovernance” or the governance of governance networks conducted by public authorities can be seen as bridge-building between state-oriented and network-oriented views on governance (Jessop 2011, Sørensen 2007, Sørensen & Torfing 2007c).

Second, it is evident that public authorities have had connections and negotiations with external actors in the past. This is especially clear in countries and policy areas with a corporatist tradition, which has meant an institutionalised dialogue between public authorities and a certain number of established organisations (Pierre & Peters 2000, Sørensen & Torfing 2007a). However, governance differs from corporatist arrangements in many ways. It has meant a pluralisation of the participating actors and more flexible forms of collaboration when compared with the institutionalised position of the participating organisations in corporatism (Hirst 2000, Kuokkanen 2004). According to Pierre and Peters (2000, 35), even the more pluralist forms of corporatism differ from governance, as they still entail governing through state institutions rather than presenting alternatives to them. Other scholars see the most important difference as lying in *attitudes* towards policy networks, which in the governance literature are to an increasing degree perceived as an effective and legitimate form of policy-making (Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, 4, Kickert et al. 1997, 2).

In a similar way, issues of citizen participation cannot be seen as a new phenomenon that has arisen simultaneously with partnership- and network-oriented forms of governance. Participation and discussion have been

inseparable parts of democracy since the times of Ancient Greece and the theories of participatory and deliberative democracy, developed in the 1970s and 1980s respectively, owe much to the Enlightenment philosophers that paved way for modern forms of democracy (Gilljam & Hermansson 2003, 22; Bengtsson 2008, 60–64). As the roots of the notions of “citizen” (city) and “politics” (polis) indicate, urban participation is not a new phenomenon either. In the Nordic countries, there is a long tradition of municipal participation which was coupled in the late 19th century with the birth of modern associations that were able to combine local activism and state-level influence through a layered model (see Chapter 3.1). In practice, many of the demands for more participatory forms of democracy can be traced to the social movements of the late 1960s and 1970s (e.g. Pateman 1970, Castells 1983). As will be noted in Chapter 2.4, many of these revitalised demands have been meshed more recently with the theory of deliberative democracy, which has itself developed since the 1980s.

Besides the questioning of a clear-cut shift “from government to governance”, the governance approach has also encountered criticism from other perspectives. One problem with the approach is that it forms a relatively loose framework which has been used both for descriptive and theoretical purposes (cf. Stoker 1998, Bevir 2011a, Skelcher et al. 2013, 16). In empirical studies, the umbrella concept of governance has been used to cover various network-based and multi-actor forms of policy-making, where the balance between the public sector, market actors and civil society has varied considerably (Levi-Faur 2012, 10–14). Thus, for instance, conclusions as to the democratic inclusiveness of governance can be very different depending on whether the research object has been a network consisting mainly of public actors, a public-private partnership or participatory initiative.

Second, single-case studies from different countries, cities (or other localities) and policy sectors have been treated in the research as if they had universal applicability (Skelcher 2007, Skelcher et al. 2013). It is evident that networked and collaborative forms of governance are based on a number of similar supra-national ideas and discourses. As was noted above, the influence of international institutions such as the EU or the OECD and the role of policy transfer from other countries have been important (for similar findings on urban policies, see Chapter 2.5). However, governance arrangements are often conducted locally through various projects, programmes, partnerships and similar policy instruments and forms of organisation, which can lead to different solutions in different places (Pinson 2009, Sjöblom et al. 2012).

A third form of critique comes from so-called critical governance studies and it questions the overall existence of “governance” as something new and different or separate from “government” (Davies 2011). As Davies (2011) states, there is no indication of a general proliferation of networks in policy-making. However, it must be noted that there are large variations between different policy fields and countries. In the empirical literature, the fields of urban and regional policy in Europe in particular have been described in terms

of a variety of networked and multi-actor arrangements, partnerships, projects, programmes, contracts and the like (see Chapter 2.5).

Finally, a fourth form of criticism concentrates on the “post-political” (Hirst 2000) character of governance and states that governance research neglects issues of power, conflict and ideology (Geddes 2005, Rosanvallón 2006, Davies 2011). In particular, the emphasis on consensualism often present in governance research and in the political rhetoric on governance is criticized from various perspectives, as it can mask powerful interests, deny the pluralism of modern societies or neglect the role of protest and free forms of citizen action in the functioning of a viable democratic system. This critique is related to the framework of governance and democracy as presented in Chapter 2.3.

“Second” and recently even “third generation” governance studies have attempted to respond to some of these critiques or to the existing gaps in research. According to Sørensen and Torfing (2007a), the second generation of governance studies of the first decade of the twenty-first century concentrated on previously under-researched issues. These included the formation of governance networks, their success and failure, the topic of metagovernance or how public authorities regulated governance networks, and the democratic problems and potentialities of governance. These two last themes in particular – the issues of metagovernance and democracy – have also been presented elsewhere as the central elements of second generation governance studies (e.g. Bevir & Rhodes 2011, Skelcher et al. 2013, 15). As will be described in Chapters 2.3 and 4.1, the ground opened up by democratic theory on participatory and deliberative democracy, empirical studies on democratic innovations, research on strategic steering, collaborative and agonistic theories of planning, and the various schools of interpretive and critical policy analysis have all contributed significantly to the research on governance and democracy.

Although the issues of metagovernance and democracy have been partly addressed in second generation governance studies, they remain current research questions (Bevir 2011a, Bevir & Rhodes 2011, Torfing & Triantafyllou 2011a, Skelcher et al. 2013). Bevir (2011a) sees that in the current situation, governance still poses a number of managerial and democratic dilemmas. From a managerial perspective, these include opportunities for policy-makers and other actors to operate in a setting consisting of hybrid organisations, plural stakeholders, and networks with a high degree of fragmentation. From a democratic perspective, there are normative questions related to issues of representativeness, accountability, legitimacy and social justice. Current governance research consists of a number of schools of thought and reflects the pluralism of social sciences (Bevir 2011a, Sørensen & Torfing 2007d).

Several scholars have recently sketched out a research agenda for third generation governance studies. According to Bevir and Rhodes (2011), these have a decentred approach, which “focuses on the social construction of patterns of rule through the ability of individuals to create meanings in action”

(ibid., 209). The emphasis is on interpretive analysis (which in practice encompasses several different schools of thought, see Chapter 4.1) and on the social construction of governance. The analysis is interested not only in elite narratives and the managerial rationalities that conduct policy, but also in the diverse traditions and narratives that inspire street-level bureaucrats and citizens. (ibid., 213–214.)

In their recent publication, Skelcher et al. (2013) see third generation governance research as consisting of comparative and critical studies. They continue with the themes of metagovernance and democracy, but see a need to focus on cross-national and cross-sectoral comparison. At the same time, third generation research has a more critical stance towards the conceptual, theoretical and empirical aspects of the first and second generation studies, for instance on the basic assumption of governance as an effective and democratic form of steering. As the governance literature has traditionally concentrated on networks, Skelcher et al. see the hybridity of new institutional forms, consisting as they do of a mixture of governance forms and cultures, as an under-researched theme. Some of the other research questions in third generation governance studies include the interaction between global trends and specific national, local or sectoral adaptations of networks or hybrids, and the relationship between governance and representative democracy and its contextual variations. Finally, there is a need to reconsider the roles of the various actors, i.e. elected politicians, public managers and citizens. (ibid.)

Despite the emphasis of the second and third generation governance studies on previously under-researched issues, the limited time frame of governance arrangements or more concretely, the “projectification” or proliferation of projects and related policy instruments such as programmes, strategies, funds, partnerships and evaluations has been under-explored (Sjöblom 2009). This also concerns the development of participation by public authorities and related actors, which is often carried out through projects (e.g. Häikiö 2005, Bäcklund 2007).

My research contributes to third generation governance research in the following ways. This study concentrates on the theme of governance and democracy, which still poses dilemmas despite the current interest in this field of research (see Chapter 2.3). Here this includes not only the analysis of new forms of participation and deliberation and the development of democratic innovations, but also the framework of strategic and programmatic steering (or, in other words, “metagovernance”). This study is based on the assumption that in practice, the development of participation and deliberation takes place through projects. However, individual projects are often situated inside a broader framework of strategies and programmes that are used as instruments of metagovernance. The study includes an analysis of the roles of the various actor groups as presented by Skelcher et al. (2013, 17) or the “street-level” interpretations of elite narratives as described by Bevir and Rhodes (2011, 214). In this study, programme managers consist mainly of non-elected public officials, the project administration consists of an NGO and stakeholders, and

the participants in the project may be citizens or, as in case of the librarians who participated in the Citizen Channel project, street-level bureaucrats. However, there is also an indirect linkage to the institutions of representative democracy through strategic and programmatic steering, and the analysis includes the reinterpretation of strategies at the project and grassroots levels.

Furthermore, this study is based on the idea that governance is contextual (see Chapter 3). In this study, this is exemplified above all by the complex issue of urban policies and metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region. However, in the background, there is also Finnish political culture, described as consensualist and corporatist, and the recent changes in the Finnish administration, inspired by NPM-oriented thinking, collaborative governance and the demands for citizen involvement. This study is also based on the assumption that these research questions are best answered through interpretive methods and is thus anchored to a broader framework of interpretive policy analysis (see Chapter 4).

The next subchapters will concentrate on research fields which are interconnected with the broader field of governance research. These include, first, the ambivalent relationship between governance and democracy, second, the research about the projectification of public policies and third, the special field of urban governance.

2.3 GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY: PESSIMISTIC AND OPTIMISTIC PERSPECTIVES

Despite the participatory rhetoric around the adoption of new forms of governance, the relationship between governance and democracy is ambivalent. The first problem derives from the definition of governance itself, as it can cover both narrow, elitist forms of public-private partnerships and relatively broad, participatory arrangements (McLaverty 2011, 403). However, even though research is limited to those forms of governance that include some forms of participation by individual citizens or NGOs, this does not exclude the potential democratic flaws presented in this subchapter. It is the very nature of governance – networks, the blurring of sectoral boundaries, stakeholder participation, adoption of flexible, ad hoc and temporary policy instruments – which poses open questions from a democratic perspective (Sørensen 2005, Börzel & Panke 2007, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Bevir 2011a, Godenhjelm et al. 2012).

In governance and democracy studies, researchers have sometimes been labelled as “optimists” and “pessimists” (Kübler & Wälti 2002, Kübler & Schwab 2007). The different views on governance and democracy are partly linked to different conceptions of democracy itself. The threat that networked and collaborative forms of governance pose to democracy is foremost a threat to representative or electoral democracy, whereas their potentialities relate to the development of a more participatory, deliberative or in other ways post-

liberal democracy (see e.g. Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Kübler & Schwab 2007, Sørensen 2005, Skelcher et al. 2013, Torfing & Triantafillou 2011b). This subchapter presents the “pessimistic” and “optimistic” views on governance and democracy.

2.3.1 A PESSIMISTIC PERSPECTIVE: GOVERNANCE AS A THREAT TO DEMOCRACY

From a “pessimistic” point of view, new forms of governance can pose a threat to the basic principles of representative democracy. In the ideal type of electoral democracy – as a practical form, usually called representative democracy – the “will of the people” is channelled through the election of representatives who make political decisions. These decisions are, according to the ideal model, implemented by an apolitical administration, controlled by elected politicians, which are, in turn, responsible to their electorate. (Gilljam & Hermansson 2003, Bengtsson 2007.)

In partnership- and network-based structures, aspects such as accountability, transparency, representation and legitimacy are unclear (e.g. Hirst 2000, Sørensen 2005, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Bevir 2011a, Skelcher et al. 2013). Governance arrangements are often separate from the institutions of representative democracy and have some decision-making powers which can rival those of elected institutions (Kübler & Schwab 2007, Warren 2009, Skelcher et al. 2013). They also challenge the chain of accountability running from elected politicians to the non-elected administration and the separation between political decision-making and the “non-political” administration that implements decisions (Torfing & Triantafillou 2011b, 6), even though a clear-cut relationship between the two has been questioned in research since the implementation studies of the late 1970s (see Chapter 2.2). Governance poses problems with accountability because it is based on networks and includes actors outside the public sector that are not subject to political accountability and control (Kübler & Schwab 2007, Considine and Afzal 2011), but also because of the ambivalent relationship between temporary organisations such as projects and the permanent administration (Godenhjelm et al. 2012). In networked and collaborative forms of governance, the decision-making situations or the decisions that are made are not necessarily official, and the number of different decision-making arenas is multiplied, which leads to fragmentation and poses problems from the perspective of political control, accountability and transparency (Kübler & Schwab 2007, 480, Giersig 2008, 59).

The representativeness, inclusiveness and equality of governance arrangements are also questionable. There is a risk that governance may lead to limited or elitist forms of participation, favouring those individuals and groups that are already active and possess resources and excluding underrepresented groups (Bang & Sørensen 1999, Geddes 2000, Sørensen 2005, Pinson 2009, McLaverty 2011). This form of critique has been applied

more generally to the models of participatory and, to some extent, deliberative democracy (Amnå 2003, Gilljam 2003; see also Young 1996, 2000, Sanders 1997). In practice, many empirical studies emphasise the elitist nature of participation, as significant groups, notably those which are already under-represented, are excluded from networks, projects and partnerships as well as from the more formalised participatory and deliberative innovations (e.g. Geddes 2000, Sintomer & de Maillard 2007, Pinson 2009, McLaverty 2011).

On the other hand, if participation is based on associations instead of individual citizens, there is a risk that these associations may become more bureaucratic, centralised and professionalised and exclude lay members from participation or maintain very weak links with them (Hirst 2000, Sintomer & de Maillard 2007, Tranvik & Selle 2008). Moreover, governance networks can also lead to a strong sense of internal communality that might undermine the construction of a broad, cross-cutting sense of communality in the larger society (Sørensen 2005, 350). All these developments, in turn, serve to diminish the democratic legitimacy of governance (e.g. Häikiö 2007, Kübler & Schwab 2007, Considine & Afzal 2011).

Another set of critiques much in the tradition of Schumpeterian elitism concerns the quality of decisions, emphasising that citizens do not have enough competence, lack a sense of the wider picture or pursue private interests over the common good (Amnå 2003, Gilljam 2003, see also Häikiö 2007, Eranti 2014). This criticism is not unique to governance studies but concerns more generally all forms of citizen participation and participatory democracy. In urban studies, this form of criticism is often framed as the NIMBY syndrome (from the words “not in my backyard”), opposition to certain activities near one’s home that could be, however, accepted elsewhere (Sintomer & de Maillard 2007). Whether citizens have the time and inclination to participate is also questioned (Amnå 2003, Gilljam 2003).

One of the most fundamental forms of critique of the governance approach (and in democratic theory, the deliberative model) concentrates on whether the search for consensus is at all democratic or whether it is a way to depoliticise issues or serve ruling interests (Mouffe 1993, 2000, Flyvbjerg 1998, Swyngedouw et al. 2002, Hillier 2003, Rosanvallon 2006, see also Chapter 2.2). In contrast to the previous forms of criticism discussed, this critique does not defend the supremacy of representative institutions but is rather trying to find more radical and insurgent post-liberal forms of citizen participation. The conflict between “consensualist” and “conflictual” perspectives is by no means new, as it is present in an important part of the literature on citizen participation and can be traced back to the 19th century. Civil society can be seen either as an intermediary structure between the state and individual citizens, which is the classical Tocquevillean approach and has more recently been the case in research about social capital (Putnam 1993), or as a site for struggle and resistance, which is the starting point for Marxian scholars (see Friedmann 1998, 21).

In the 1990s, the juxtaposition between consensual and conflictual modes of participation came to the fore, in particular in planning theory and has since then been broadly present in critical and interpretive policy analysis (which will be more thoroughly presented in Chapter 4.1). The critics of governance research who see conflict as a necessary element in politics and democracy come from various backgrounds, though often within a Foucauldian or Gramscian framework (see e.g. Mouffe 1993, Mouffe 2000, Flyvbjerg 1998, Swyngedouw et al. 2002, Rosanvallon 2006). All these critics nevertheless share the idea that politics must include conflict in order to act as a channel for underrepresented or critical opinions and more generally, that the functioning of a viable democracy necessitates conflict. “Agonistic” theories of democracy or planning (Mouffe 1993, 2000, Hillier 2003) have given special emphasis to the necessity of dealing with conflict – not replacing it by consensus, but by creating arenas where there is an opportunity to meet “the other” and to move from enemies into adversaries or in other words create respect between the conflicting parties. Some governance scholars have even tried to implement this perspective within governance studies (Torfing & Triantafyllou 2011b, 17).

Finally, many empirical studies emphasise the clash between the different working logics, institutional arrangements and forms of democracy (e.g. Häikiö 2005, Leino 2006, cf. Blaug 2002). Even if there is an increase in various participatory and deliberative initiatives, empirical studies often show an unclear linkage between them and the existing political and administrative institutions (Häikiö 2005, Bäcklund 2007, McLaverty 2011). The effectiveness and the actual impact of citizen participation on political decision-making, public administration and the content of specific policies is often questioned (Flyvbjerg 1998, Geddes 2000, Paddison 2009, McLaverty 2011). Public authorities still play an important role in framing the participatory and deliberative processes and they have considerable power in aspects such as agenda-setting, final decision-making and deciding who to include (Häikiö 2005, McLaverty 2011) – or more abstractly, in setting out the rationalities that shape the whole process (Flyvbjerg 1998, Leino 2006).

There is evidence that the development of participation and the design of democratic innovations have become professionalised, while the process of participation in itself becomes instrumentalised and technical with no real influence attached to it (Nonjon 2005, 2012). This issue has been especially prominent in development studies, as the paradigm of participation has been applied to a greater extent and for a longer time in the field of development than in Western public administration (e.g. Cooke & Kothari 2001, Hickey & Mohan 2004). At the same time, there are high expectations for citizen participation that do not always lead to the results anticipated by public authorities (e.g. Edelenbos & Klijn 2005, Leino 2006, Barnes & Prior 2009). This can concern the rate and amount of participation, but also non-conformist forms of action that participants themselves may decide to use.

This subchapter concentrated on the threat that networked and collaborative forms of governance pose to democracy, especially to the basic principles and institutions of representative democracy. However, in governance research and more generally in the studies on participation and democratic innovations, there are many positive elements associated with governance from a democratic perspective. This partly relates to the participatory and deliberative potential of governance, but also the re-interpretation of concepts such as accountability, representation and legitimacy. This theme is addressed more thoroughly in the next subchapter.

2.3.2 AN OPTIMISTIC PERSPECTIVE: THE DEMOCRATIC POTENTIALS OF GOVERNANCE

From an “optimistic” perspective, governance can be understood as the growing participation of different groups in decision-making, as a means of empowering civil society and moving decision-making closer to the local level, and as the development of more relational forms of democracy instead of aggregating preferences (e.g. Hirst 2000, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Sørensen 2005, Warren 2009, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Torfing & Triantafillou 2011b). In the literature, the potentials of governance are linked to the development of more participatory, deliberative or in other ways post-liberal democracy, while the role of representative institutions is still seen as relevant through metagovernance and strategic steering (see e.g. Sørensen 2005, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Torfing & Triantafillou 2011b, Skelcher et al. 2013). Although ideal models of democracy are seldom directly applicable in practice, insights from democratic theory have nevertheless had an impact on the development of participation, especially since the 1990s.

In the literature and in the concrete policy programmes aimed at developing participation (for the Finnish case, see Chapter 3.1) the representative model is seen as being in crisis, as reflected in decreased turnouts in elections, declining membership rates for political parties and traditional mass movements, decreasing levels of trust towards political institutions and problems around effectiveness in policy-making (e.g. Laws & Hajer 2006, 420, Warren 2009). At the same time, there is a more normative critique which concentrates on the perceived capabilities of citizens, the plurality of the forms of political participation and the problems of representation, sometimes coupled with a Republican idea of the common good and a critique of individualism (Barber 1984, Pateman 1970, Putnam 1993, 2000).

In this context, participatory democracy has been used as an umbrella concept to gather on the one hand, the direct ways for citizens to influence political decision-making and on the other, the different forms of direct decision-making by citizens (Gilljam & Hermansson 2003, 19). The theory of participatory democracy has arisen as a reaction to the elitist, institution-centred and individualist elements of representative democracy and has a

strong connection to the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s (Pateman 1970, Barber 1984, Bengtsson 2007, 57). However, the works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau anticipated many of the central elements of later writings on participatory democracy: the emphasis on the direct participation of citizens in political decision-making; participation as a way to protect citizens' interests and to ensure good government; a relationship between participation and the individual's capacity to be one's own master; the role of participation as a form of civic education; and the integrative function of participation or the feeling of belonging to a community through participation (Pateman 1970, 24–27; cf. Barber 1984). In addition, in the context of representative democracy, participatory democracy entails the control and critique of elected politicians (Gilljam & Hermansson 2003, 19–20, Amnå 2003, Rosanvall 2006).

At the same time, the theory of deliberative democracy is linked to networked and collaborative forms of governance because of the emphasis on consensualism, negotiations and joint problem-solving, which both the governance approach and the theory of deliberative democracy share (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007). In the ideal type of deliberative democracy, people should discuss with each other, listen to each other's views, try to understand them and evaluate the arguments presented in a rational way. The deliberative process leads to the “ennoblement” of the original opinions and finally, according to the ideal type, to a mutual understanding and consensus. This is seen to increase both the effectiveness and the democratic quality of policy-making. (See e.g. Habermas 1984, Cohen & Sabel 1997, Elster 1998, Dryzek 2000.) In common with the ideal type of participatory democracy, the deliberative model has an element of civic education, as the deliberative process is seen to augment both the informative and the political skills of the participating citizens (see e.g. Fung 2003, Herne & Setälä 2005, cf. Grönlund et al. 2010), much in line with classical Republican thinking.

Even if the theories of participatory and deliberative democracy are in the ascendant in governance studies, the overview by Torfing and Triantafyllou (2011b) shows that the democratic potentials of what they call “interactive policy making” can be extended to a broader spectrum of post-liberal democratic theories. These include, first, theories that are partly grounded in aggregative theories of democracy, based on competition between various actors. From this perspective, it is possible to create new arenas for this competition between elites. Here, Torfing and Triantafyllou even mention the theory of “associative democracy” as developed by Paul Hirst (2000), which would be based on mutually competing associations providing services and acting as channels of participation. Other post-liberal theories mentioned by Torfing and Triantafyllou include performance or output-based democratic theories which emphasise the outcomes of policies (e.g. Fung & Wright 2003), community-based democratic theory emanating from communitarian and Republican thinking, and the theories of agonistic democracy mentioned

above, which have a critical view of consensus and promote the development of arenas for conflict between mutually respecting adversaries (e.g. Mouffe 1993, 2000).

The democratic potentials of governance have been associated with the development of so-called democratic innovations, which have been actively studied especially since the 1990s (e.g. Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Geissel 2009, Smith 2009, Newton & Geissel 2012). Graham Smith (2009, 1) defines democratic innovations as “institutions that have been specifically designed to increase and deepen citizen participation in the political decision-making process”. This form of participation is often developed by public authorities and related actors and differs from free forms of citizen mobilisation (e.g. Blaug 2002). However, other scholars group under the category of democratic innovations various forms of practices developed by citizens themselves, social movements and governments at multiple levels (Skelcher & Torfing 2010, 72). In the Finnish research, it is typical to make a distinction between the very similar-looking concepts of *osallistuminen* (participation), *osallisuus* (inclusion, involvement) and *osallistaminen* (making people participate or “invited participation”) (Bäcklund et al. 2002, Bäcklund 2007).

Although there are innovations that are targeted directly at the political decision-making process (see Geissel 2009, 53), scholars of public administration have emphasised that in many cases, participatory and deliberative initiatives are conducted in the sphere of policy rather than politics (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Laws & Hajer 2006, Warren 2009, Häikiö & Leino 2014b, see also Chapter 4.1). From that perspective, there is a process of politicisation at the policy level which gives greater room for manoeuvre for a broad group of actors to influence policy, now no longer seen as the implementation of political decisions by the non-elected administration. The Canadian democracy scholar Mark Warren (2009) speaks of “governance-driven democratisation” when he refers to participatory developments in different policy fields, driven by public officials in association with a body of “democracy entrepreneurs” (or “democratic process entrepreneurs”) outside the channels of electoral democracy. According to David Laws and Maarten Hajer (2006, 419–421), the question of how the legitimacy of administrative action can be enhanced is thus turned the other way round and reformulated as how policy practice can contribute to the broader legitimacy of the state and representative institutions.

According to Warren (2009), governance-driven democratisation can be considered a third transformation of democracy – the first being the rise of mass electoral politics in the 19th century and the second the advocacy and social movement politics that have emerged since the 1960s. Governance-driven democratisation is not replacing other forms and spaces of democracy but is rather a response to democratisation in these other areas, with a spill-over effect in the field of policy. The logics that drive governance-driven democratisation are issue-focused and relate to policy development, planning and administration rather than to the global legitimacy of elected

governments. According to Warren, if the previous wave of democratisation was driven by citizen activists, governance-driven democratisation is very much about elite responses (for similar findings, see Blaug 2002, McLaverty 2011, Skelcher et al. 2013). The key actors in the introduction of the new democratic processes are public officials, together with a large industry of consultants and other “democracy entrepreneurs” (see also Nonjon 2005, 2012). Warren explains this with the functional reason that policy-makers find themselves at the sharp end of the complexity, pluralisation and dynamics referred to above (or in Warren’s words, the “new pluralised ungovernability”).

According to the governance literature, the development of participation and deliberation are linked to effective decision-making and the complexity of societal problems, but they are also a response to the pluralisation of societies, with the increase in the number of democratic arenas targeted at specific groups (see Chapter 2.2). Many of the positive effects of citizen participation can be justified from the perspective of policy effectiveness (Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Börzel & Panke 2007, Warren 2009). From the perspective knowledge production, citizens and other grassroots level actors are seen to represent experience-based local knowledge that can complement or question prevailing expert knowledge and act as sources of innovation (e.g. Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Staffans 2004, Healey 2006, Bäcklund 2007). It is hoped that the direct participation of different groups and the creation of deliberative modes of decision-making will lead to better conflict resolution and to the creation of mutual trust, joint responsibility and a sense of ownership among the participating actors (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Sørensen 2005, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007). These developments should lead to better execution of policy and a decrease in conflicts and resistance to implementation (Fung & Wright 2001, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Sørensen and Torfing 2007a). In many policy initiatives, the inclusion and commitment of local actors has been seen as a way to achieve lasting results. The body of research on social capital in particular has emphasised the relationship between an active civil society and positive economic development and policy performance (e.g. Putnam 1993, Putnam 2000, Mayer 2003).

The development of citizen participation is also related to the pluralisation of societies, as the diversity of social groupings cannot be adequately represented by the existing representative institutions (Skelcher et al. 2013, 135). Participation in governance arrangements is often based on the stakeholder or “all affected” approach (Sørensen 2005, Warren 2009), which means for citizens an increased number of arenas of influence and the possibility to influence the issues that affect them the most (Sørensen 2005). There are for instance various “empowering” initiatives that are aimed at enhancing the inclusion of marginalized groups that do not necessary get heard in the context of representative democracy (McLaverty 2011, Kuokkanen forthcoming a). Both the participatory and deliberative theories of democracy emphasise civic skills learned in the processes of participation and deliberation which include not only knowledge of politics but also political

activity itself (Pateman 1970, Barber 1984, Fung 2003, Grönlund et al. 2010, see also Sørensen 2005). This logic is the main driver of the current “empowering” initiatives conducted in worse-off neighbourhoods as part of European urban policy (Kuokkanen 2005, Kuokkanen forthcoming a, Pinson 2009) or especially in the Anglo-American context, characterises voluntary work in general (Eliasoph 2011).

According to the “optimistic” logic, the risks of governance – especially to accountability, representation and legitimacy – can be overcome, because these concepts are defined in a different way in the context of governance from in the traditional public administration (Scharpf 1999, Considine & Afzal 2011). Participatory and deliberative forms of democracy are seen as complementing representative institutions rather than replacing them (Amnå 2003, 107, Gilljam & Hermansson 2003, 20, Warren 2009). Elected politicians are responsible for metagovernance, “the governance of governance” (Sørensen 2007, Jessop 2011, Torfing & Triantafyllou 2011a). Considine and Afzal (2011, 378) take the view that even if governance challenges linear chains of accountability, accountability in the context of governance is understood in terms of navigational competence and as facilitating collaborative action (for similar findings, see Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, Pinson 2009). Further, research finds a linkage between elected politicians and governance arrangements, even if this link is often indirect and weaker than in the traditional forms of linear administration, at a time when the role of unelected administrators has grown (e.g. Skelcher et al. 2013, 147–148, cf. Warren 2009). Governance is strongly related to a shift towards strategic steering, where politicians set the strategic framework for policies but keep their distance from the concrete details of their implementation (Granberg 2004, Sulkunen 2006, Pinson 2009, Peters 2010, Skelcher et al. 2013). However, existing research shows different forms of metagovernance, where politicians can either directly participate in governance arrangements or employ more distant hands-off strategies (Sørensen 2007, Peters 2010, Jessop 2011, Torfing & Triantafyllou 2011a, Skelcher et al. 2013).

Second, in networked and collaborative forms of governance, the issue of representation is based on the participation of stakeholders or “all affected” (Sørensen 2005, Warren 2009), where in principle, all those actors which are affected by the policy in question should have the opportunity to participate. In clearly defined and planned democratic innovations such as the various deliberative forums, the issue of representation is considered in the selection of the participants (Font & Blanco 2007). In the more ad hoc forms of participation such as projects, representation is related to the existence of a multitude of simultaneous projects, where actors can in principle choose between different projects (Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, 166). Especially in initiatives which are based on the participation of special, underrepresented groups (such as immigrants, persons with disabilities and so on), there is an underlying idea of “politics of presence” (Phillips 1995) or the direct involvement of such groups in issues that concern them (McLaverty 2011,

Kuokkanen forthcoming a). Finally, in many urban governance arrangements, there is an idea of area-based participation defined by a geographically limited area such as the neighbourhood (e.g. Andersen 2001, Smith et al. 2007, Kuokkanen forthcoming a).

Third, the issue of legitimacy is highly dependent on the issues of accountability and representation mentioned above. However, in governance research, even such arrangements which do not necessarily fulfil all the democratic criteria may be seen as legitimate. In a much-referenced study, Fritz Scharpf (1999) distinguishes between input-orientated legitimization, based on the “will of the people”, and output-orientated legitimization, based on the promotion of the common welfare of the constituency in question (according with the classical decision-making model by David Easton 1965). According to Scharpf, governance networks are needed in the search for effective solutions, and their legitimacy is, most of all, output-orientated (ibid., 20). However, in more recent governance research, the participatory and deliberative elements of governance are seen to enhance three forms of legitimacy: input legitimacy, by introducing direct forms of participation; throughput or procedural legitimacy, by increasing deliberation in the decision-making process; and output legitimacy, by leading to better political decisions and societal problem-solving (e.g. Kübler & Schwab 2007, Font & Blanco 2007, see also Keränen 2014). According to Skelcher et al. (2013, 136), while (urban) governance arrangements still derive their much of their legitimacy from their connection to elected institutions, they also draw on non-elected political institutions embedded in society, technical instruments such as contracts, and the direct involvement of citizens.

Despite the general trends outlined above behind participatory initiatives in public administration, there are in practice a variety of rationales behind such schemes. According to a British study (Barnes et al. 2007), four to some extent interrelated discourses have been particularly influential in defining invited participation in public policy and service provision. These are, first, the “empowered public” discourse, focusing on marginalised and/or disadvantaged groups or communities that need to be activated through participatory schemes (see also Smith et al. 2007, Pinson 2009, Kuokkanen forthcoming a). The second is the “consuming public” discourse, focusing on individuals in their use of public services. Here, citizens participate mainly as “users” or “consumers” of these services and use their power in choosing the services, and also giving feedback on them. A third form of discourse is the “stakeholder public” discourse, built on the idea that individuals or groups have a stake in the good governance of the public realm, and the fourth is the “responsible public” discourse, based on the idea that individuals and groups owe a duty to others and to the state.

Generally, all these forms of participatory discourses are intertwined with the idea of active citizenship, which participatory schemes either seek to strengthen through empowerment (Eliasoph 2011, Kuokkanen forthcoming a) or require as a starting point for citizen participation (Boltanski & Chiapello

1999, Sulkunen 2006, van de Wijdeven & Hendriks 2009, Eriksson & Vogt 2012). One of the modern classics of the research on participation and active citizenship is the work of Bang and Sørensen (1999) on “Everyday Makers” or local “do-it-yourself” type actors who are situated between radical activists and the high-level “democratic elites” of governance networks. An Everyday Maker can be characterised by slogans such as “do it yourself”, “do it where you are”, “do it concretely instead of ideologically” or “do it with the system if need be” (for the complete list, see Bang and Sørensen 2001, 156). Even if they, to a greater or lesser extent, vote and keep themselves informed about “high politics”, their political identity is primarily based on their action and networks at the local level (ibid.). A more recent publication by Bang and Sørensen (2001) involves a related but distinct category of “Expert Activists” who are more deeply involved in the functioning of governance networks and have a more strategic approach to these networks than the Everyday Makers.

In their study on Dutch neighbourhoods, Ted van de Wijdeven and Frank Hendriks (2009) have further developed the model of Everyday Makers and Expert Activists into four ideal types by combining an axis of institutional versus situational logic with one of structural versus ad hoc involvement. These ideal types are *neighbourhood experts*, who are structurally involved and follow institutional logic; *case experts*, who are involved on an ad hoc basis but follow institutional logic; *everyday fixers*, who are structurally involved but follow situational logic; and finally, *project conductors*, who are involved on an ad hoc basis and follow situational logic. According to de Wijdeven and Hendriks (2009), all these different ideal types can be found among neighbourhood-level activists and represent a “vital citizenship” that can be distinguished both from “passive citizenship” (rights and duties) and from citizenship as identity (ibid., 122).

The empirical findings about governance and democracy are mixed and there is evidence for both the pessimistic and optimistic viewpoints. The pessimistic findings were presented in the last subchapter. However, several scholars do describe relatively positive experiences of citizen influence and empowerment, with high levels of inclusion, clear impacts from participation processes and an increase in the quality of the political decisions made or in dispute resolution (see e.g. Fung & Wright 2001, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Kübler & Schwab 2007). Elsewhere, the research on more formalised deliberative innovations (such as citizens’ juries, consensus conferences or deliberative opinions polls) shows deliberative processes having a positive impact on citizens’ knowledge and political activity (Font & Blanco 2007, Grönlund et al. 2010, McLaverty 2011).

In the current literature on governance and democracy, although many researchers acknowledge both the optimistic and pessimistic viewpoints, they tend to take a stance in favour of one or other of them. The starting point of this research is to have neither an optimistic nor a pessimistic interpretation of governance and democracy, but to “test” them (as much as this concept can be used in qualitative case studies) through an empirical analysis of Finnish

programme- and project-based metropolitan governance and the development of citizen participation in that setting. This will be done by analyzing the development of participation and “democratic innovations” (which, in turn, can have both participatory and deliberative elements) in a specific project, and by considering the framework of strategic and programmatic steering and its relationship with representative democracy (in other words, “metagovernance”).

The next subchapter will nevertheless concentrate on another theme, which has not gained enough attention in the literature on governance and democratic innovations. In practice, many governance arrangements are based on projects and related fixed-term policy instruments such as programmes. This concerns many of the participatory initiatives and democratic innovations developed by public authorities and other actors (e.g. Häikiö 2005, Bäcklund 2007). In the next subchapter, the special field of projectification and its relationship with governance studies is presented more in detail.

2.4 PROJECTIFICATION AS AN UNDER-RESEARCHED FIELD

The network-oriented approach to governance has been criticised for not concentrating on the concrete policy instruments through which governance is implemented (Pinson 2009, Sjöblom 2009, Le Galès 2011, Sjöblom et al. 2012, Jensen et al. 2013). Even though governance scholars have enlisted a variety of flexible, negotiable and network-based instruments (see e.g. Le Galès 2011, Skelcher et al. 2013), in recent research, a group of researchers has emphasised that many governance instruments and forms of organisation are temporarily delimited and that projects – interconnected with a group of related policy instruments and forms of action such as programmes, strategies, funds, partnerships and evaluations – are an essential aspect of the new forms of governance (Sulkunen 2006, Jensen et al. 2007, Pinson 2009, Sjöblom et al. 2012). According to the French urban political scientist Gilles Pinson (2009, 323), it can even be stated that a project is a prerequisite for a governance network. Through projects, actors are mobilised into networks and common interests and interdependencies are created among them. At the same time, projects are also seen as a reaction to networks and as a way to find modes of organisation in a network society (Jensen et al. 2007, Boltanski & Chiapello 1999; cf. Castells 1996). Even though there exists a broad literature on project management, especially for the private sector, scientific knowledge about the use of projects as an aspect of governance and public policy is still seen as inadequate – to the extent of being a non-issue in the governance debate (Sjöblom 2009). However, the more recent research in political science and public administration has tried to fill this gap and analyse projects in

relation to the wider literature on governance (Jensen et al. 2007, Pinson 2009, Sjöblom et al. 2012).

The current research emphasises the importance of “projectification” – the growing use of projects as part of public policy (Sjöblom et al. 2006, 2009, Sulkunen 2006, Jensen et al. 2007, Godenhjelm et al. 2012). In the public sector, the proliferation of projects and other temporary forms of organisation is related to public policy reform (see Sjöblom et al. 2006, Rantala & Sulkunen 2006a, Sjöblom 2009, Godenhjelm et al. 2012, Jensen et al. 2013). The use of projects in the public sector can be seen as representing the central ideals of New Public Management: the adoption of policy instruments and forms of action from the private sector, performance management, the separation of politics and administration, and, to some extent, outsourcing and the purchaser-producer model (see e.g. Sjöblom et al. 2006, Rantala & Sulkunen 2006, Jensen et al. 2007). However, if New Public Management is said to emphasise privatisation and market-based solutions, the foundational elements of the networked and interactive forms of governance are also present in projects, as they are based on networks, a multitude of actors from different backgrounds (in the project language, “stakeholders”), collaboration and negotiation. In the public sector, projects are widely used, especially in fields such as regional, rural and urban policy (e.g. Sjöblom et al. 2012). Even core fields of the welfare state – such as social and health care and education – are being affected by projects (Jensen et al. 2007, 10, see also Rantala & Sulkunen 2006). More generally, the development, testing and adaptation of new modes of action in the public sector usually take project form (Jensen et al. 2007).

In project management, there is a strong presupposition about the rationality (even “hyper-rationality”) of projects which has been taken on by the public administration (Sjöblom 2009, 166). The field of project management has developed as a separate discipline, concretely related to the growing use of projects that has taken place in the fields of business administration and engineering and in particular, in the military and building industries since the 1950s (Sjöblom 2006a, 10, Packendorff 1995, 321). The principles of project management share many common elements with Frederick W. Taylor’s ideas of scientific management (or “Taylorism”) which aimed to improve efficiency and productivity (Engwall 1995). Organisations such as the International Project Management Association (IPMA) and the Project Management Institute (PMI) have played a big role in the establishment of project management as a special field of expertise (Packendorff 1995, 320, Godenhjelm 2006, 76).

In the project management literature, a project is generally defined as having the following characteristics: it is a unique task, with a predetermined date of delivery, one or more performance goals and complex and/or interdependent forms of action (Packendorff 1995, 320). However, the project management literature is said to draw an idealised picture of projects and according to empirical studies, projects are seldom so rationally steered and

clearly delimited as the literature presupposes (Sjöblom 2006a, 23–24, Jensen et al. 2007, 23–25). In the 1990s, the Swedish project researcher Johann Packendorff (1995) introduced the concept of temporary organisation to overcome the limitations of the project management approach. In his definition, rather than emphasising the uniqueness of projects, Packendorff saw temporary organisations as organised and collective courses of action evoking non-routine processes or completing non-routine products, having a specific time frame and performance evaluation criteria, and being the object of conscious organizing efforts.

The concept of project covers various forms of action, and projects are conducted in a range of different environments (Packendorff 1995, Jensen et al. 2007). Public sector projects operate in a different framework from projects in industry and business (Godenhjelm 2006, Jensen et al. 2007). According to the Gilles Pinson (2009), projectification in the public sector emanates from two levels: the macro, of political steering of the state; and the micro, of concrete forms of public action at local level. In a similar tone, Jensen et al. (2013) state that the growing use of projects concerns all three levels of the political-administrative system: the policy setting, the institutional setting and the micro setting (see also Hill & Hupe 2009).

At the macro level, public sector projects belong to a broader framework of strategic steering (Sjöblom 2006a, Sulkunen 2006, Pinson 2009). According to Pinson (2009, 332–334), projects are “instrumental innovations” that are aimed at separating political leadership and policy implementation. The intention is that though politicians set the strategic framework for a project, they remain absent from the operative part – its concrete realisation – which is characterised by delegation and decentralisation. According to Pinson, the strategic framework for individual projects is often relatively vague, but it is nevertheless the one from which they take their form (*ibid.*, 176).

In practice, programmes are often used as policy instruments between upper-level strategies and individual projects. Programmes can even be seen as a strong form of strategic steering which combines strategic ideals with the concrete allocation of resources (cf. Tolkki et al. 2011, 53). According to the ideal of programme management, programmes set the general framework for individual projects and group them together, whereas projects are the main instruments for the implementation of programmes (Sulkunen 2006, 17, Mikola 2007, 87). For instance, all the projects realised as part of the Structural Fund policy of the EU follow the principle of programming, which means that the EU funds multi-annual national programmes aligned to EU objectives and priorities, which then channel the funding for individual projects (Regional Policy – Inforegio: Principles). Programmes and projects are often used together with related policy instruments and forms of action such as contracts, evaluations, funds and partnerships. Programmes and projects are based on contracts between the central actors, financed by funds and monitored by evaluations, while partnerships define the roles of actors inside programmes and projects. (Sulkunen 2006, 17.) A central characteristic

of all these instruments is that they are temporarily delimited, targeted at a specific purpose and often include a variety of actors – or in the project language, stakeholders.

Public sector projects are used for a variety of purposes. According to the classification drawn up by Jensen et al. (2007), reform projects aim to create new solutions and replace existing practices in permanent organisations; experimental projects try to solve a new type of assignment or work with a new target group; collaboration projects involve several actors working on a common project; and assignment projects work according to the idea of contracting out, using a principal–agent model. These four groups of projects differ in how the relationship between the project and the so-called permanent organisation (usually municipal administration) is organised. A common element for these public sector projects is nevertheless their use in testing, trying new things and creating networks and collaboration.

In the project literature, there are a number of expectations associated with public sector projects (Sjöblom et al. 2006, Jensen et al. 2007, Sjöblom et al. 2012). Many of them are identical with the expectations of governance in general – economic synergies, joint-problem-solving, collaboration, mobilisation and networking – but some of them are explicitly related to the limited time frame and targeted form of action of projects. Projects are seen as a way to combine resources from a variety of sources (Sjöblom 2006a, Jensen et al. 2007, Pinson 2009). These resources include not only financial resources, but also knowledge, competence and personnel. Projects are also supposed to solve certain societal problems which transcend the boundaries of the intensely sectorised and specialised public administration (Pinson 2009, 331, Sjöblom et al. 2012), which is especially pronounced in the Nordic context (Jensen et al. 2013). According to Pinson (2009, 163), projects are based on various forms of knowledge, which are joined together in a process of negotiation where actors try to find a consensus and make mutual adjustments. Rather than general knowledge, projects favour contextual and experience-based forms of knowledge. At the same time, the potential of projects in the creation of innovations is emphasised (Sjöblom 2006a, Sulkunen 2006).

In the literature, projects are seen both as instruments for coordinating existing actors, institutions and interests and as mechanisms for mobilising new groups – or in the project language, stakeholders (Sjöblom 2006a, Jensen et al. 2007, Pinson 2009). Collaboration in projects can be vertical, between different levels of the administration; and from that perspective, projects can be seen as intermediary organisations between different administrative levels (Sjöblom 2006a). At the same time, projects include horizontal collaboration between various public actors, firms, NGOs or citizens as well as other, simultaneous projects (Jensen et al. 2007, Pinson 2009).

The temporally delimited character is, in the project literature, expected to lead to rapid and targeted results (Sjöblom 2009, Sjöblom et al. 2012, Jensen et al. 2013). However, there is a tension between the short-term logic of

projects and long-term political objectives (Sjöblom et al. 2012; this theme is analysed later in this subchapter in relation to critical project literature) even if the strategic framework of projects is seen as a way to create a longer-term framework for individual projects (Pinson 2009). According to Pinson (2009), projects are related to a political will to include proactive and strategic thinking, which has nevertheless been framed differently from before to distinguish it from the older discourse and ideal of economic and societal planning (see also Swyngedouw et al. 2002). Pinson sees that unlike the earlier tradition of planning, projects have a greater capacity to deal with uncertainty, because there is a constant interaction and iteration between the different phases of action (from problem definition to decision-making, implementation and evaluation). Moreover, projects are based on broader participation, more contextual forms of knowledge and more networked modes of coordination than the rationalistic tradition of planning. Projects allow a greater degree of experimentation than the regular administration (Jensen et al. 2007). If there is uncertainty about a policy or an organisational arrangement, projects are easy to disrupt and terminate if results are unsatisfactory (Jensen et al. 2013, 125).

Projects also have powerful symbolic significance (Sjöblom 2006a, Jensen et al. 2007, 185–187). According to Jensen et al., (ibid.) there is a need in policy to use concepts that sound up to date and fit current ideology. In this context, projects are seen as a credible and modern form of action, which shows that the public sector is acting efficiently and mobilising external resources. This, in turn, augments the legitimacy of political measures. Projects can be seen as a combination of rational planning, order and control and at the same time experimentation, freedom and the transcending of boundaries (Jensen et al. 2013, see also Sahlin-Andersson 2002). According to Sjöblom (2006), projects are a way to legitimate both state level policies and EU policies – especially the Structural Fund policy, which is strongly based on programmes and projects.

In sociological literature, projectification is related to broad changes in social and economic relations (Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, Sulkunen 2006). According to the French sociologists Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello (1999), projects form an integral part of the current “spirit of capitalism” – or, more precisely, its ideological justification. The authors speak of a “projective city”, meaning a new apparatus of justification, which in practice is coupled with a concrete form of organisation based on projects.

According Boltanski and Chiapello (1999), projects as an organisation form are a reaction to the rise of networks and act as mediators in networks in two ways. First, they allow engagement, because networks as such lack organising capacities both socially and economically. Socially, projects create encounters between people and act as highly activated parts of networks over a relatively short time period. At the same time, they create long-term relationships which become latent once the project has ended, but which can be activated again at a later point. Economically, projects act as temporal pockets of accumulation: they enable production and the accumulation of capital in a world of flows that

cannot by themselves stabilise, accumulate or take form. Second, projects form an ideological basis for the current system. According to Boltanski and Chiapello, a system based on networks and projects is leading to a new system of values. Issues of justice and representation cannot be addressed in the context of networks, where excluded actors tend to disappear without trace. Projects are thus needed to allow representation in networks and provide an arena for judgement. The authors see the notion of activity as being the main quality of a projective city. In addition, the demands for more deliberative democracy (see Chapter 2.3) provide an ideological basis for projects.

The project literature has presented several characteristics required in projects. Boltanski and Chiapello (1999) speak of the “big ones” and “small ones” in the projective city. The big ones, i.e. those who succeed, must have the capability to create and maintain networks. They have characteristics like activity, enthusiasm, confidence to others and good communication skills. The temporary nature of projects also emphasises their availability, flexibility and polyvalence or the capability to change activities or tools if needed. The big ones know the best sources of information; they are innovative; and they bring personal experience. Further, they must have the capability to interest and engage other people, to act as mediators, to adapt to local circumstances and to get on with people from various backgrounds. These characteristics are more or less identical to what Williams (2002) enlists as the main qualifications of boundary spanners in inter-organisational relationships: their networking and communication skills, their entrepreneurial and innovative qualities, their ability to engage with others from various backgrounds, their capability to create trust, their personal skills such as reliability, openness and tolerance, their influencing and negotiating management style, and their understanding of the complex interrelationships, roles, and chains of accountability among actors.

In the literature, the growing use of projects is criticised from a number of perspectives. Like the other forms of network and collaborative governance, projects are from a critical perspective seen as a part of a neoliberal shift in political steering and as a way to dismantle the welfare state by introducing private actors and market-based mechanisms and replacing universal models of service provision with contextual and fragmented forms of action (Pinson 2009, 15–18, cf. Sulkunen 2006, Kuokkanen forthcoming a). From a democratic perspective, projects are seen in the critical literature as benefiting resourceful actors and as a form of consensus that excludes critical voices, and as undermining the role of representative institutions (Pinson 2009; see also Swyngedouw et al. 2002, Kovách & Kučerová 2006). For instance the analysis by Pinson (2009) of European urban projects – which covers both building and development projects – comes to very critical conclusions. According to him, even if projects widen the circle of participants and are based on a logic of deliberation, they do not mean a massive democratisation of local political life, as significant groups which do not possess resources or which pose a threat to the consensual agenda are excluded from the process. Pinson even

states that projects indicate a shift to post-democracy, where public policy is conducted by social, economic and cultural elites which do not need popular support from the masses.

However, the literature about the democratic effects of projects is ambivalent and follows the same logic as the literature on governance and democracy in general, encompassing both “pessimistic” and “optimistic” views (see Pinson 2009, Godenhjelm et al. 2012, cf. Chapter 2.3). In common with the other forms of networked and collaborative governance, projects can be associated with the search for more participatory and deliberative forms of democracy, as they are based on collaboration, the coordination of interests and the mobilisation of stakeholders (Pinson 2009, Godenhjelm et al. 2012). Much of the development of participation and democratic innovations carried out by public authorities and other actors is *de facto* based on projects (e.g. Häikiö 2005, Bäcklund 2007). In her study, Nina Eliasoph (2011) emphasises the role of “Empowerment Projects”, based on the empowerment of vulnerable groups and the creation of an active citizenship as a central element in current voluntary work. Even though her analysis is from the United States, a similar logic characterises many of the urban projects conducted in the context of EU policies (Kuokkanen forthcoming a).

As was noted above, the most significant difference between the project literature and the more general governance approach is the concept of time. In the critical literature, the temporarily limited character of projects is seen as having a negative effect on the actual effectiveness of projects, as long-term, persistent societal problems are tackled with short-term solutions (Forssell et al. 2013, see also Sjöblom et al. 2012). At the same time, the results of individual projects are often implemented with difficulty in the permanent administration (Sjöblom et al. forthcoming). Inside organisations, concrete project work is seen to lead to the growing precarisation of working life (Boltanski & Chiapello 1999) or to “project fatigue” (Jensen et al. 2007, 188–189).

The contribution of this study to the project literature is to analyse the use of projects in the implementation of public policy, especially in the fields of participation and metropolitan governance. As was noted above, the classic project management literature has an overly idealised picture of projects which differs from the actual use of projects in the public sector (Jensen et al. 2007, 23–25, Sjöblom 2006a, 23–24). Even though there is a growing literature on the analysis of public sector projects (e.g. Jensen et al. 2007, Pinson 2009, Sjöblom et al. 2012), the relationship between projectification and democracy is an under-researched field. There is a particular need to look at projectification from the broader perspective of political steering and metagovernance. According to the existing literature, projects are related to a broader framework of strategic steering, but there are few empirical studies on the relationship between strategic steering and concrete projects. At the same time, democratic innovations and the development of participation by public

authorities and related actors often take project form (Häikiö 2005, Bäcklund 2007). This too is an under-researched field in the literature.

In the literature, urban policy, especially the “new urban policies” implemented in Western Europe since the 1990s, is seen as one of the key examples of collaborative, interactive and networked forms of governance. Urban policies are strongly based on programmes and projects, which often include the mobilisation of stakeholders and, to some extent, initiatives for direct citizen participation. Within urban governance research, the issue of metropolitan governance derives in part from an older research tradition. The next subchapter will concentrate on the special research field of urban and metropolitan governance.

2.5 THE SPECIAL RESEARCH FIELD OF URBAN AND METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE

In current literature, urban policy – especially the “new urban policies” implemented since the 1990s – is seen as one of the key examples of the collaborative, interactive and networked forms of governance (Andersen & van Kempen 2001, Le Galès 2002, Kuokkanen 2005, Pinson 2009, Skelcher et al. 2013). Even though there are national and local differences in these policies, urban policy as implemented across Western Europe shares many common elements, not least because of the European Union (Kuokkanen 2005, Le Galès 2005, van den Berg et al. 2007b). Urban policies are cross-sectoral, based on multi-actor networks and the participation of a variety of public, semi-public and private actors, including citizens and NGOs. In practice, they are implemented through programmes, projects, contracts and partnerships (Kuokkanen 2005, Pinson 2009, Jensen et al. 2013). It can be stated that urban governance has been a field where power relations between the state and the cities have been in turbulence (Le Galès 2002, Brenner 2004, Pinson 2009). Within cities, there have been new levels of action such as the neighbourhood and metropolitan levels and new actor constellations, for instance between previously rival urban elites (Le Galès 2002, Atkinson 2007, Pinson 2009, Katz & Bradley 2013).

Scientifically, the study of urban governance has been the research field where the idea of governance has been the “most hotly and fruitfully” debated (Skelcher et al. 2013, 2; see also Le Galès 2002, Brenner 2004, Giersig 2008, Pinson 2009). This in part draws on the critical tradition in urban studies, which has led to some discussions which have not always broken through into the governance debate in political science and public administration. The idea of “urban policy” has also been a politically contested category because of tensions between, for instance, the state and the municipalities, the urban and the rural, and redistributive and competitiveness-oriented policies (see e.g. Le Galès 2005, von Bruun & Kirvelä 2009, 64).

As in the general governance research, networked and collaborative urban policy is seen in the urban governance literature as emanating from complexity, pluralisation and new sectoral, spatial and temporal dynamics at the urban level (Andersen & van Kempen 2001, Wagenaar 2007, Pinson 2009). First, urban problems such as residential segregation, social exclusion and environmental problems are seen as complex issues that transcend the traditional boundaries of public administration and require a multi-actor approach. From this perspective, different actors are seen to have different resources and forms of knowledge, including local knowledge of residents in their neighbourhoods. (Andersen & van Kempen 2001, Kuokkanen 2005, Wagenaar 2007.) At the same time, new forms of joint action are seen as a way to promote cities as collective actors and to enhance urban competitiveness (Le Galès 2002, 2005, Granberg 2004, Buck et al. 2005, Pinson 2009, Kuokkanen 2005). Cities are in the frontline of pluralisation, with a range of different lifestyles and people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds (e.g. Andersen & van Kempen 2001). From this point of view, more participatory and deliberative forms of governance are seen as a way to get the voices of these different groups heard.

From the perspective of sectoral dynamics, urban policy is often based on an “integral” approach, where the unit of action is the metropolitan level, city or neighbourhood rather than a specific policy sector (Andersen & van Kempen 2001, Kuokkanen 2005, Atkinson 2007, van den Berg et al. 2007a). In practice, this means both horizontal cooperation between governmental departments and vertical collaboration between the various levels of administration. However, the blurring of sectoral boundaries not only means crossing boundaries inside the public administration, but also the inclusion of actors representing the market or civil society. Urban policies are based on partnerships, which in their most narrow form mean horizontal and vertical public-public partnerships or the public-private partnerships seen in large-scale urban development projects (e.g. DiGaetano & Strom 2003, Granberg 2004). However, urban partnerships often include a broad variety of actors mobilised in joint projects and other networks, including municipal officials, local entrepreneurs, research institutes, NGOs, cultural institutions and community groups, to name but a few (see e.g. Le Galès 2002, Kuokkanen 2005, Pinson 2009, Katz & Bradley 2013; the issue of urban participation will be presented later in this subchapter).

From the perspective of spatial dynamics, urban policy involves an interaction between different scales – the European Union, the state, the metropolitan level, the municipality and the neighbourhood – which is often referred to as multi-level governance (Giersig 2008, cf. e.g. Hooghe & Marks 2001). Several scholars see urban policy as an important mechanism in the shifting power relations between nation states and cities, city regions or the local level more generally (Le Galès 2002, Brenner 2004, Pinson 2009, Moisio 2012). However, scholars labelled as neo-Weberians, most prominently the French scholar Patrick Le Galès (2002, see also Bagnasco & Le Galès 2000, Le

Galès 2005) and neo-structuralists, most notably Neil Brenner (2004, see also Brenner & Theodore 2002) disagree on the direction of the change, even if they agree on many of the developments contouring it (see also Giersig 2008).

In this debate, Le Galès sees this development as leaving a large space for urban multi-actor networks and leading to the strengthening of cities as collective actors vis-à-vis the state and in the European arena. Further, even though the discourse of competitiveness has grown in force, European cities are still characterised by the legacy of the Keynesian welfare state. Meanwhile, Brenner sees the process as a national strategy of “rescaling the statehood”, backed by international institutions and neoliberal ideology, which aims to mobilise cities in global competition and differs radically from the urban and regional policies of the Keynesian era. The central argument is that urban governance “has served as a major catalyst, media and arena for state rescaling processes” (Brenner 2004, 174). According to Brenner (176–177), the goal of supranational competitiveness has led to political initiatives at the national level which are often targeted at cities and city regions (for similar findings from Finland, see Pelkonen 2008, Moisio 2012).

Besides the shifting power relations between states and cities, another form of spatial dynamics related to urban policy and governance is the strengthening of two policy levels: the supra-municipal or metropolitan level and the sub-municipal or neighbourhood level (Lefèvre 1998, Andersen 2001, Booth & Jouve 2005, Atkinson 2007). However, it must be noted that issues of metropolitan and neighbourhood-level governance have a longer history than the “new urban policies” that started in the 1990s. In political science, there is a long research tradition about the optimal size of decision-making structures, especially from the perspectives of effectiveness and democracy (Dahl & Tufte 1973). Similarly, the debate on the optimal organisation of metropolitan governance dates back to the 1960s and 1970s, when the school associated with the metropolitan model opted for metropolitan-level institutions and proponents of public choice emphasised competition between individual municipalities (Lefèvre 1998, Kübler & Heinelt 2005, Kübler & Schwab 2007).

In this debate, the school associated with the metropolitan model advocated directly elected political institutions at metropolitan level, with a sufficient level of autonomy and resources and wide-ranging jurisdiction. Geographically, metropolitan institutions were supposed to cover the functional urban area so that the institutional, social and economic structures of a city would correspond with each other. From an economic perspective, large units were seen as benefitting from economies of scale. They were also seen as providing better opportunities to distribute resources within the region and leading to more equitable outcomes in the fields of urban planning, housing and service production. In this context, institutional consolidation could take two forms, either direct municipal mergers or the introduction of a new level of administration at the metropolitan level. In the 1960s, scholars of public choice opposed to the metropolitan model questioned its empirical

basis and stated that competition between individual municipalities (and if necessary, voluntary forms of cooperation), small scale operations, and fragmentation rather than the creation of metropolitan-wide institutions would lead to optimal solutions. Their argument emphasised free choice of localisation for residents, based on the Tiebout (1956) model of citizens “voting with their feet”, which would then lead to the provision of optimal service baskets by individual municipalities. (Lefèvre 1998, 10.)

In the organisation of the metropolitan-level administration, the governance approach that emphasises collaboration, multi-actor networks and flexible policy instruments is seen as a compromise between the two earlier schools of thought (Lefèvre 1998, Kübler & Heinelt 2005, Kübler & Schwab 2007). However, in practice, network-based metropolitan governance can take various forms and include various degrees of metagovernance. According to Tolkki et al. (2011, 52–53), the lightest form of networked and collaborative metropolitan governance is based on advisory boards and loose collaboration networks which discuss metropolitan issues. Final decision-making remains with the existing municipal institutions and organisations, and important metropolitan issues require unanimous decisions from them. A slightly stronger form of organisation is strategic and programmatic steering, where strategies and programmes set frames for the units of the local or regional administration. This can be an effective way to combine top-down control with local knowledge, especially if the framework includes financial resources (e.g. through programmes). However, both models can remain relatively ineffective in a framework of strong municipalities and conflictual issues. (ibid.)

In addition to metropolitan governance, governance at the neighbourhood level occupies a central position in new urban policies (Andersen 2001, Kuokkanen 2005, Smith et al. 2007). Social urban policies in particular are *de facto* neighbourhood policies, as the political initiatives are targeted at worse-off neighbourhoods and, to some extent, coordinated and decided upon there. In the literature, the neighbourhood is often seen as the optimal level for direct forms of resident participation and as a crucial site for local democracy, especially among advocates of participatory democracy and communitarian thinkers (Purcell 2007, 202; see also Cochrane 2007, 48, Pinson 2009, 206–207). However, Marc Purcell (2007, 202–203) states that the heterogeneity of current democratic theories means that it is very difficult to determine *a priori* the most “democratic” scale at which to organise governance. Governance structures at the metropolitan scale may or may not be more democratic than smaller or larger-scale structures. According to Purcell, these scales are contingent and will result from particular political struggles among particular actors in particular times and places.

Temporarily, it can be stated that urban policy is one of the central policy areas – together with regional, rural and environmental policy – which are based on projects and related policy instruments such as programmes, contracts and partnerships (Kuokkanen 2005, Vranken 2005, Pinson 2009,

Forssell et al. 2013). The scope of urban projects in urban policies can concern concrete building processes (Swyngedouw et al. 2002, Pinson 2009) but also various forms of development and policy implementation (Kuokkanen 2005, Vranken 2005, Pinson 2009, Forssell et al. 2013) which are studied here. Pinson (2009) relates the rise of urban projects to increasing interurban competition and urban marketing (see also Swyngedouw et al. 2002). According to him, projects serve both an internal and an external function for cities. Externally, projects aim to promote the city, its qualities and its political intentions and strategies. Such projects are closely related to place marketing, but also to the creation of collective identities. Internally, projects act as a way to mobilise, produce and coordinate resources. Pinson relates the internal role of urban projects not only to the critique of modernist forms of planning and the need to include various forms of knowledge, but also to the deepening of networks between various urban elites. Moreover, social urban policies include projects that are aimed at empowering citizens especially in “worse-off” neighbourhoods (Pinson 2009, see also Kuokkanen 2005, Kuokkanen forthcoming a, Smith et al. 2007, Eliasoph 2011).

At the same time, Pinson (2009, 86–89) sees urban projects as typical examples of the shifting power relations between the state and cities. In the 1980s, Western European states started to move from central planning policies to territorial policies based on local actors, which has often been called endogenous development in the regional policy literature (e.g. Westholm et al. 1999, Brenner 2004, see also Moisio 2012). These policies took different forms, emphasising contracts between the state and local actors together with the creation of local strategies, partnerships and, in some cases, inter-local competition. According to Pinson, common to these initiatives was the use of projects elaborated by local actors. For instance in the French context, there was an increase in regional and city-level contracts where the state acted as a provider of resources and the initiator of cooperation between local actors that were not used to engaging with each other. Even if the state was present in these constellations, this collaboration led to the diffusion of a “project culture” among local actors and to a shift of responsibilities to the local level. According to Pinson, the control of the state in such territorial policies is increasingly a formal and procedural one, and local actors define the content of these policies.

Despite the current rhetoric of “new” urban policies used since 1990s, urban policies as such are not new. However, cities remained long embedded in the nation-state, with only a few exceptional policies that could be considered urban. Moreover, the rise of the universal welfare state erased many of the social and economic specificities of cities, especially in Northern Europe. (Le Galès 2005.) Brenner (2004) uses the concept of “spatial Keynesianism” to describe the period from the late 1950s to the late 1970s. According to him, the urban and regional policies of the period were situated in the broader framework of the Keynesian welfare state and oriented towards the nationalisation, homogenisation and equalisation of political and

economic life inside the state (for similar findings from Finland, see Moisio 2012). The national scale was the most important level of action and the regional and local levels were subordinated to it. This meant in practice relatively uniform structures of territorial administration and compensatory regional policies aimed at reducing regional disparities. In this context, municipalities served as “long arms” of national welfare policies (Brenner 2004, 137, drawing on Harvey 1989). This has been especially pronounced in the Nordic countries, where it has been said that urban policies cannot be studied without relating them to the tradition of the welfare state, especially the role of municipalities as the “local welfare state” and the tradition of redistributive regional policies (Granberg 2004, cf. Moisio 2012).

Explicit urban policies came back onto the political agenda in several European countries in 1970s (Le Galès 2005, Cochrane 2007), even if in the Nordic countries, this shift occurred later, in the 1990s (Holstila 2007, Matthiessen 2007, Nilsson 2007). Behind the rise of urban policies were issues such as the economic crisis, industrial restructuring, long-term unemployment, new forms of poverty and social exclusion, riots and new waves of immigration (Le Galès 2005, 238). However, as was noted, researchers have also pointed out a more social constructivist view of the rise of urban policies, as during different eras, different sets of problems have been framed as urban and not belonging to the field of general social or economic policies (Atkinson 2000, Cochrane 2007). In addition, in Europe there has been policy transfer, first from the United States, where neighbourhood-level social policies have been implemented since the 1960s (Cochrane 2007), and later between European countries.

The European urban policies of the early 1970s had a strong social dimension and were targeted at poor populations within cities, but by the late 1970s, the priorities of European urban policies started to change and economic development became the main aim of policy. This development occurred in two phases. First, in the 1970s and early 1980s, cities affected by deindustrialisation conducted economically oriented policies of “endogenous” development to cope with the changed situation, and early economically oriented urban policies included social and territorial redistribution inherited from the previous redistributive ones. In Britain, the Thatcherite ideology of the 1980s strengthened the economic dimension of urban policy, which started to emphasise economic performance, competitiveness and public-private partnerships. (Cochrane 2007, 85–88; see also Brenner 2004, 177). By the late 1980s, the objective of urban competitiveness had come to characterise urban policies conducted in Europe (with the exception of the Nordic countries, which followed in the mid-1990s) and states started to fund initiatives which aimed to improve the position of individual cities in global competition (Brenner 2004, Kuokkanen 2005, Cochrane 2007). Urban scholars have four, interrelated explanations for the change: the strengthening of neoliberal ideology at the national level; globalisation and the intensification of global competition; the strengthening of the idea of cities as

engines of economic development in the national economy and in global competition; and the withdrawal of the state at local level (Le Galès 2005, Brenner 2004, Cochrane 2007).

The urban policies that have been conducted across Europe since the 1990s, often referred to as “new urban policies” (Andersen & van Kempen 2001, Kuokkanen 2005), are based on a combination of several elements that have been inherited from earlier policies. First, the policies have an economic dimension, with the competitiveness of cities forming the cornerstone (Brenner 2004, Buck et al. 2005, Kuokkanen 2005, Cochrane 2007). This logic is based on the assumption that in a globalised world, cities must compete against each other in order to succeed economically, and their economic success benefits the whole national economy (Kuokkanen 2005, Cochrane 2007). Even though the state is often in the position of co-funding urban policies, the responsibilities of the local level with regard to success in competition are emphasised (Pinson 2009, 267). Cities have to profile themselves in such a way that they can win in global competition. Policies are based on local strengths, networks and economic activity. Competitiveness derives not only from traditional industries, but draws on culture, too – for instance through branding, place marketing, the attraction of the “creative class” (Florida 2002) and cultural industries (for an overview see Cochrane 2007).

Second, urban policies have a social dimension (Buck et al. 2005, Kuokkanen 2005, Cochrane 2007). According to this logic, universal social policies are not by themselves capable of preventing residential segregation and other specific urban social problems such as exclusion and social unrest. The redistributive policies of the Keynesian welfare state are seen as insufficient or criticized for rendering residents passive and unresponsive (Pinson 2009, 206–207). Specific cross-sectoral policies, usually conducted through projects, are targeted at worse-off neighbourhoods, as defined by low income levels, high levels of unemployment and inhabitants living on social benefits – and often, at least implicitly, the number of immigrants (Kuokkanen 2005, Smith et al. 2007, Pinson 2009). The policies are based on the idea of empowering individuals and special groups in the neighbourhoods, which will thus benefit the neighbourhood and the entire city.

A third dimension of urban policies often concentrates on the environmental problems in cities, although this dimension is less strongly present than the issues of urban competitiveness and social segregation (Buck et al. 2005, Kuokkanen 2005). Finally, the fourth dimension of urban policies does not concern their content but the way in which they are conducted and coordinated, i.e. issues of urban governance. The interrelation of these four dimensions has been called by Buck et al. (2005) the “New Conventional Wisdom”, generally accepted and approved by the central actors in urban policy. In the introduction to Buck et al. anthology (2005), Gordon and Buck (2005, 6) state that even if these key assumptions about urban policies seem relatively fuzzy, they are central to a way of talking about the strategic agenda

for government which has been very widely adopted or even become hegemonic – especially at the level of the European Union and the OECD, and also in the national urban policies across Europe, Canada, Australasia and the Far East. The logic of this “New Conventional Wisdom” is well presented in the following citation:

Put crudely, cities were being seen as crucial to the achievement of competitiveness, cohesion and responsive governance (and perhaps environmental sustainability also) at a societal level. For cities in their turn, competitiveness, cohesion and governance come to be seen as a key to their survival, individually and collectively. And finally, this set of economic, social and political concerns (again with the possible addition of the environment) is understood to be interdependent and mutually reinforcing, rather than as competing values to be traded off against each other.

Gordon & Buck 2005, 6.

The European Union has been an important driver, not only in the fields of governance and projectification, but also in urban policy. The EU has promoted urban policies and the role of the local level in three ways (Pinson 2009, 110, see also Le Galès 2002, 103–105). First, the EU has reduced individual states’ room for manoeuvre in the promotion of redistributive regional policies. Second, the EU has conducted its own structural policies that have assigned an important role to local actors and their projects. In the context of urban policy, the URBAN Community Initiative, which started as a pilot in 1990 and ended in 2006, has been of specific importance here. However, general Structural Fund policies have also impacted cities by spreading the working logic of programmes, projects, partnerships and endogenous development (cf. Kuokkanen 2004). Third, EU has been active in creating networks between cities and other local authorities (such as Eurocities and Urbact) and gathering together experts who have been able to exchange experiences.

Despite the relatively similar trends in new urban policies, it is worth remembering that urban policies are not monolithic (Le Galès 2005, 245). First, there are national differences. Aspects such as the administrative structure of the state; the degree of local autonomy and the responsibilities of the local level; the welfare state regime; the authorities responsible for urban policy; and the structure of the urban system such as the level of urbanisation, the number and characteristics of cities and the urban-rural relationship – all these affect national urban policies (Andersen 2001, 235–236, van den Berg et al. 2007c). For instance in the Nordic countries, the tradition of a redistributive regional policy, the strong role of municipalities in service provision and a sectorised and specialised administration have affected the shaping of urban policy. Second, even inside a single country, something described as an “urban policy” can consist of very different, even contradictory

policies (Le Galès 2005, 245). This is characteristic of policy-making in general, but is pronounced in urban policies which are based on multi-level governance, the idea of endogenous development and local strengths, and the realisation of the policies through local projects (Le Galès 2005, Pinson 2009, Skelcher et al. 2013).

The academic research on urban governance resembles the general governance approach as it is applied in the field of political science and public administration (see e.g. Andersen & van Kempen 2001, Elander 2002, Le Galès 2002, Giersig 2008, Pinson 2009, Skelcher et al. 2013). However, the scientific background to urban governance research has some special characteristics that need to be acknowledged. According to Gerry Stoker (2000, 91–92), the study of urban politics went through many of the same cycles and trends as the wider field of political science – institutionalism in the 1950s, behaviouralism and the elitism–pluralism debate in the 1960s – but in the 1970s, it went on a different path when compared to mainstream political science. The study of urban politics was strongly inspired by Marxist research, which must be seen in relation to the broader processes of change in cities and to the social conflicts and urban movements of the era (Le Galès 2002, 188). At the same time, the reality of American cities has played a big role, largely due to the fact that the history of urban studies started from the analysis of cities in North America. In particular, the American research on urban public-private networks such as the growth machine literature of the 1970s (Molotch 1976) and the regime literature of the 1980s (Stone 1989) has had a significant impact on studies of urban governance. (Bagnasco & Le Galès 2000, John 2001, Giersig 2008.)

The field of research on urban participation has been lively since the 1970s and has reflected both the neo-Marxist legacy of urban studies and the broad changes in Western societies. According to an overview by Le Galès (2002), the research on urban participation has been characterised by a dialectic of consensus and conflict. In the 1970s and 1980s, researchers concentrated on urban social movements as important actors in political struggle and as promoters of urban change (Castells 1983). Urban participation was related to broad protests as in Paris or New York in 1968, but also more generally to the action of civil rights groups and social movements which deployed a broad repertoire of political action. From this perspective, conflict was seen in the research as a progressive force. However, later research has also concentrated on regressive forms of conflict in urban participation such as the NIMBY syndrome (from the words “not in my backyard”), opposition to certain activities near one’s home that might be accepted elsewhere. At the same time, the urban governance literature has emphasised the benefits of consensual modes of urban participation. (ibid.)

Since the 1990s, the “consensual” and “conflictual” modes of urban participation have been debated, especially within planning research. The concept of “communicative”, “collaborative” or “participatory” planning has a strong connection with theories of deliberative and participatory democracy,

emphasising the direct participation of citizens and the need to include deliberation and discussion in the planning process (e.g. Bäcklund et al. 2002, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Healey 2006). This research has led to a counter-reaction which underlines the unequal power relations in the planning process, the need to give space to suppressed voices and the necessity of conflict (Flyvbjerg 1998, Hillier 2003, see also Chapter 2.3).

The discussion on governance and democracy with its pessimistic and optimistic viewpoints (see Chapter 2.3) can be directly applied to new urban policies and urban governance. Urban governance based on networks, projects and multi-actor urban policies can be seen as a threat to representative institutions such as municipal councils, yet at the same time as a way to provide more participatory and deliberative forms of action (Elander 2002, Granberg 2004, Kuokkanen 2009, Pinson 2009, Skelcher et al. 2013). In practice, many democratic innovations have been conducted at the level of local government (Font & Blanco 2007, 557, Geissel 2009). However, the elitism or the low effectiveness of urban participation and the problems associated with the logic of consensus in general have been highlighted by urban scholars (Flyvbjerg 1998, Paddison 2009, Pinson 2009).

According to Skelcher et al. (2013, 22), the current literature has emphasised a shift from big city government based on elected politicians and a professional administration to multi-actor networks, and from input legitimacy to questions of throughput and output, in common with the broader governance approach. Consequently, the roles of central actors in urban governance have been redefined. Participatory and deliberative practices have led to Republican ideals of active citizens who have direct contacts with policy-makers (here, Skelcher et al. mainly refer to elected politicians). Municipal councils have been redefined as strategic decision-makers and metagovernors, while non-elected municipal officials have become managers with authority over the design and implementation of public policy and services (see also Majoinen 2001, Le Galès 2002, Granberg 2004). This concerns upper-level officials in particular (e.g. Le Galès 2002, Pinson 2009), and a special group of actors whose role has been strengthening is mayors, both elected and appointed (John 2001, Le Galès 2002, Barber 2013).

According to overviews of “new urban policies” in several European countries, these policies often include participatory devices in partnerships, projects and joint forms of action with a certain predefined framework and purpose (Denters & Rose 2005, Kuokkanen 2005, Heinelt et al. 2006, van den Berg et al. 2007d, Skelcher et al. 2013). However, comparative studies show that citizen participation in urban policies can take various forms and occur in different phases of the policy process, with different levels of inclusion and different decision-making models, and through the action of NGOs or individual citizens (Heinelt et al. 2006, see also Denters & Rose 2005, Sintomer & de Maillard 2007). Citizen participation in urban policy is most often sub-municipal, restricted to the neighbourhood level. In the English-speaking literature, the neighbourhood has often been referred to as a

“community”, which presupposes some sort of shared history, common interests or some identifiable ethnic group (Cochrane 2007, 48). As was noted above, this is related to the – sometimes debated – idea of the neighbourhood as a site of local democracy near the everyday life of the residents (Cochrane 2007, 48, Purcell 2007, 202, Pinson 2009, 206–207).

In current urban policy, citizen participation has several functions (Cochrane 2007, Kuokkanen 2009, Kuokkanen forthcoming a). In socially oriented urban policies, participation has been closely linked with the idea of empowerment of residents in problematic neighbourhoods (Kuokkanen 2005, Cochrane 2007, Smith et al. 2007, Pinson 2009). Increased democratic involvement of the residents is both an objective and a means of realising such policies (Jensen et al. 2013, 129). The active participation of the local inhabitants in neighbourhood level projects and partnerships is based on the broader ideas of the active mobilisation and responsabilisation of individual citizens – in other words, on active citizenship (Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, Sulkunen 2006, Barnes et al. 2007, Pinson 2009, Skelcher et al. 2013). The ultimate aim of such projects is to integrate both the “excluded individuals” into society and the “excluded neighbourhoods” into the city (Kuokkanen 2005, Kuokkanen forthcoming a, Smith et al. 2007, Pinson 2009, 206–207).

Citizen participation in urban policies is also seen to have an economic effect (Cochrane 2007, Kuokkanen 2009). This conclusion is drawn from several perspectives. First, participation is seen as an important element in the creation and sustenance of social capital in neighbourhoods, which, in turn, has a positive effect on the economy of cities (Mayer 2003, Cochrane 2007, Kuokkanen 2009). Second, the activity of the “creative class”, interconnected with the cultural turn in urban policy, is seen to have a positive effect in creating competitive and economically successful cities (Florida 2002). The economic role of civil society is also related to the role of the third sector in the provision of services, when some of the public services are outsourced to civil society actors (Cochrane 2007, Kuokkanen 2009).

Especially in the urban planning literature, citizens are seen as representing local, experience-based knowledge from their neighbourhoods (e.g. Bäcklund et al. 2002, Staffans 2004, Healey 2006, Bäcklund 2007, Kuokkanen forthcoming a). Besides being residents, citizens are the users of local public services, whose opinions are increasingly sought and gathered according to the idea of what Barnes et al. (2007) call the “consuming public discourse”. Finally, cities act as “laboratories” of participation (Kazepov 2005a, 33), in which new modes of participation are initiated and tested. The overviews of European cities (e.g. Denters & Rose 2005, Heinelt et al. 2006) show that at the urban level, there are numerous initiatives aimed at testing new modes of participation – many of them in the form of projects (Kuokkanen forthcoming a). According to Nonjon’s analysis (2005, 2012) of French urban policy, the growing emphasis on the development of participation has even led to a new group of professionals acting in the field,

much in accordance with the more general framework of democratic innovations presented in Chapter 2.3.

The contribution of this study to the research on urban and metropolitan governance is to give a detailed analysis of the programme- and project-based urban policies and metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, characterised by a combination of a strong state (based on the Nordic welfare state model), strong municipalities and a certain level of complexity and conflict around the issue of metropolitan governance. In that context, it is nevertheless assumed that the programme- and project-based form of action has much in common with the picture presented by the international literature on urban governance because of the strong role of actors like the European Union and international examples in propagating that model. Special attention will be paid to metropolitan participation – with emphasis on direct forms of metropolitan participation and the role of programmes and projects in enhancing it – which has been an under-researched theme in the literature.

The next subchapter will draw together the various strands which form the analytical framework of this study – governance, democracy and projectification and the framework of (Finnish) urban and metropolitan governance. The more concrete operationalisation of these themes will be presented in Chapter 4, together with the methods and data deployed in this study.

2.6 THE FRAMEWORK OF THIS STUDY

The aim of this subchapter is to provide a synthesis of the research gaps identified earlier in the chapter and position this thesis in relation to them. From the perspective of governance research, the research agenda for third generation governance studies includes demands for a more decentralised approach, interpretive analysis, and an interest not only in elite narratives and the managerial rationalities, but also in the diverse traditions and narratives that inspire street-level bureaucrats and citizens (Bevir & Rhodes 2011, 209, 213–214). At the same time, there is a need for more contextualised, comparative and critical studies and recognition of hybrid forms of governance (Skelcher et al. 2013). The studies carry on some of the themes of second generation studies, such as democracy and metagovernance. Other research questions include the interaction between global trends and specific national, local or sectoral adaptations, and the roles of the various actors (elected politicians, public managers and citizens) in these processes. (ibid.)

The research on governance and democracy is still mixed, giving support to both the pessimistic and optimistic views on collaborative and networked forms of governance. My study will address this question through an empirical case study from the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. In this study, the broader issue of governance and democracy is approached from two main perspectives. The first of these is that of the metagovernance of programmes and projects

through their relationships with institutions of representative democracy and strategic steering. The second is that of the development of participation – in research often referred as the development of democratic innovations – especially in the Finnish municipal and metropolitan context.

However, the main contribution of this study is to combine the research on governance and democracy with research on projectification. In project research, public sector projects, although a growing field, form a special case in a project management literature that emanates primarily from the world of business. The classic project management literature is said to provide too idealised and simplistic a picture of projects (Jensen et al. 2007, 23–25, Sjöblom 2006a, 23–24) and a more nuanced view is needed. Especially in the research about democratic innovations and the development of participation, the role that the project form plays is an under-researched topic. The main interest in this study is what happens to citizen participation when it is developed through projects.

Finally, research on urban and metropolitan governance provides the empirical framework for this study: the development of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region. This research field, even though it accords with many of the central claims of mainstream governance research, has because of its critical research tradition provided new insights on governance. Especially in metropolitan governance, research on the changing relationship between the state and the local level (Le Galès 2002) and the thesis of rescaling policies (or, ultimately, “rescaling the state”, Brenner 2004) provide tools to help understand the process of metropolitan reform. In this context, special attention will be paid to metropolitan participation – with emphasis on direct forms of metropolitan participation and the role of programmes and projects in enhancing it – which has been an under-researched theme in the literature on metropolitan governance and urban participation. At the same time, the research on the priorities of “new urban policies” enhances our understanding about the content and framework of urban policy initiatives. Here, the prominent role of urban competitiveness and its relation to citizen participation in particular must be taken into account.

As was noted in Chapter 1, the research questions in this study are the following:

Governance: What forms of governance and metagovernance are used in programme- and project-based urban and metropolitan development? Do the actor groups involved (programme administration, project administration, project participants) have different interpretations of the aims of the programme/ project and their role in it?

Participation: What are the central issues in the development of participation by the public administration and closely related actors at the local level and more specifically, in the field of metropolitan participation?

Projectification: What happens when participation becomes the object of development projects? What are the effects of such a development on the implementation of public policies, on the roles of various actors and, ultimately, on participation itself?

Regarding all the above points, is there support for a pessimistic or optimistic perspective (as presented in the earlier literature on governance and democracy) with regard to the development of participation through projects in the context of Finnish metropolitan governance?

This study is based on the assumption that context matters. Before the empirical analysis, the context of this study will be presented in detail in Chapter 3 – meaning, first, the Finnish political and administrative system, together with the status of Finnish democracy as it appears in research and policy reports and recent initiatives to augment citizen participation. The second part of the chapter will concentrate on Finnish urban policy and the special case of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region.

The exact way in which the theoretical framework of this study is operationalised in the study is presented in Chapter 4. This chapter consists of, first, an overview of interpretive policy analysis in general and second, the methodology and data for this study.

In the empirical part of this study, the theoretical frame of reference is considered in the following way: the framework of governance as it obtains in the programme- and project-based development of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area is studied analysed in Chapter 5. Here, the entity formed by the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the Citizen Channel project is seen to form a system of governance with a range of aims, actors and forms of action present in the programme and project administrations and among the participants of the project. The contribution of this study to governance research is to compare these groups of actors' interpretations of the Urban Programme, the Citizen Channel project and their own roles in them, and to analyse the issues of participation, democracy and metagovernance in the light of them. The study also contributes to the existing urban and metropolitan governance research through a detailed analysis of programme- and project-based metropolitan governance in the Finnish context of a strong (welfare) state and strong municipalities that have long been in competition with each other in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.

Chapter 6 mainly concentrates on the issue of participation, with regard to both the “participatory turn” as a general phenomenon in Finnish municipalities and the special case of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region. Here, the interest is in how the actors involved in the development of participation – municipal officials, representatives of local NGOs and, to some extent, resident activists – see role of participation and the “participatory turn”

in Finnish public administration, especially at the municipal level. The contribution of this study particularly concerns the issue of direct metropolitan participation and the role of programmes and projects in enhancing it.

Chapter 7 deals with the issue of projectification, which is highly interconnected with frameworks of governance and participation. Here, the main question is how the project form affects the development of participation. Special attention will be paid to the role of the various actors in projects, to the way in which the fixed-term time frame of projects affects these actors, and, ultimately, to what happens to participation itself – or in other words, to the aim of participation in the policy process and to the role of the participants in it – when it is developed through projects.

The concluding Chapter 8 draws together all these various strands. It also answers the question of whether this study gives more succour to the “pessimistic” or “optimistic” perspective as presented in the earlier research on governance and democracy.

3 THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Governance literature has been criticised for ignoring the political, social and economic contexts of countries, regions and cities (Skelcher 2007, see also Skelcher et al. 2011, 2013). Among scholars of urban governance, many Europeans have distanced themselves from the American tradition of urban studies and highlighted the specificity of European cities, the common elements in their histories and structures, and the role of the welfare state (Le Galès 2002, Bagnasco & Le Galès 2000, see also Kazepov 2005b). However, there is also considerable variation inside Europe (Goldsmith 2005). Especially in the Nordic countries, it has been emphasised that urban governance cannot be studied without understanding the tradition of the universal welfare state, the context of strong municipalities and their role in the implementation of welfare services and the rationalistic tradition of urban planning (Granberg 2004). At the same time, the collaborative and participatory features of governance must be related to the broader pattern of interaction between the state and civil society (cf. Skelcher et al. 2011), which in the Nordic countries has meant a consensual and corporatist system, with active civic associations which have nevertheless been close to the state (Alapuro & Stenius 1987, Rothstein 2003, Götz & Hackmann 2003).

The aim of this chapter is to give an overview of the Finnish context, first from a general perspective and then in relation to the issue of citizen participation and recent policy initiatives in the field. Finally, we will look at urban policy and the issue of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region.

3.1 THE FINNISH POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM AND THE ISSUE OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

In a Swedish study on urban governance, it was stated that urban governance cannot be studied without understanding the Nordic context of the universal welfare state, strong municipalities implementing welfare services and the rationalist tradition of urban planning (Granberg 2004). Meanwhile, a recent piece of comparative governance research stated that important contextual factors which explain cross-national differences in the relationship between governance networks and (representative) democracy are the distinction between majoritarian and consensus democracy, and the varying strengths of voluntary associations (Skelcher et al. 2011). This research is based on the assumption that these factors play an important role in the Finnish context. We will first look at the Finnish political and administrative system as a whole before examining the state of Finnish democracy and considering political initiatives aimed at increasing citizen participation.

3.1.1 THE FINNISH POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

The Finnish political system is characterized both by a strong unitary state and by municipalities with a high level of autonomy, taxation rights and broad legally defined responsibilities. The local structure is a one-tier system; the regional level is relatively weak with no elected authorities or taxation rights. Finland was a very agrarian country until recently. Industrialisation and urbanisation started relatively late, in the 1950s, but the processes have been very rapid and the urbanisation process is still ongoing. (Holstila 2007, 125; Sjöblom 2011, 254.)

In the literature, Finland has been characterized by the Nordic welfare state model (see e.g. Esping-Andersen 1990), based on publicly provided services and a universalistic system, in which everyone is in principle guaranteed the same services, which are funded by progressive taxation. The building of the Finnish welfare state and its administrative institutions started in the 1940s, and underwent its most intensive period in the 1960s and 1970s (Sjöblom 2011, 243). It was in practice municipalities which assumed the broadest responsibilities in providing services. However, the framework of the welfare state and the principle of universalism led to relatively uniform solutions in different areas (cf. Moisio 2012, see also Chapter 2.5). In municipalities, this meant the creation of a professional and strongly sectorised administration, which was partly built on the earlier legacy of strong public administration and a legalistic framework dating from the Russian era (Nousiainen 1998, 337, Saukkonen 2003, 18).

Since the 1990s, municipalities have been granted more freedom and flexibility in the provision of services, but their economic situation has also tightened considerably and the extent of their statutory responsibilities has increased. Because of the one-tier system, municipalities are responsible for an exceptionally wide variety of duties even by Nordic standards (Sjöblom 2011, 246). At regional level, Regional Councils are joint municipal authorities to which all the municipalities of the region have to belong. Their main duties are in the field of regional development and planning, and they are central actors in the implementation of EU Structural Fund policy. In addition, municipalities have inter-municipal cooperation in a number of policy fields such as health care and education. The state regional administration is organised into six Regional State Administrative Agencies, along with the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment. In recent decades Finnish regional administration has undergone several reforms and more will follow in the near future – especially in the organisation of social and health services, which will to a growing extent be organised at the regional level.

In recent comparative governance research, it has been stated that important contextual factors which explain cross-national differences in the relationship between governance networks and (representative) democracy are the distinction between majoritarian and consensus democracy and the varying strengths of voluntary associations (Skelcher et al. 2011). Using Arendt

Lijphart's (1999) classification, Finland is a decentralised unitary state and primarily a consensus democracy, with a number of interrelated features (Sjöblom 2011, 243–245). Consensualism has meant, first, a proportional system of representation and especially since the late 1980s, broad coalition governments, and, second, a neocorporatist model which has been in place since the 1960s, with broad income policy agreements and a system of consultation and collaboration between key interest groups and the state. More generally, Finnish civil society has been characterised as being close to the state, and social movements have actively contributed to the building of the Finnish nation-state (Alapuro & Stenius 1987; for similar findings from the other Nordic countries, see Götz & Hackmann 2003, Rothstein 2003). Finnish associations have traditionally had a layered structure, with a number of overlapping organisations running from the local to the national level, as in other Nordic countries (Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009, see also Götz & Hackmann 2003, Rothstein 2003, Tranvik & Selle 2008). This form of organisation has enabled a combination of grassroots mobilisation and state-level collaboration and influence strategies (cf. Tranvik & Selle 2008).

Consensualism has also meant a relatively larger set of shared perceptions and principles about the organisation of society (Saukkonen 2003). In the past, there have been sharp social cleavages in Finnish society, but since the 1960s, there has been a strong emphasis on national cultural unity in the political system (Sjöblom 2011, 243–244, Saukkonen 2003). Representative democracy coupled with a strong municipal autonomy, a capitalist system combined with the structures and ideology of the welfare state, a culture based on the Finnish language together with a strong legal status for the Swedish-speaking minority, the existence of two established churches (Lutheran and Orthodox) sometimes called state churches, and the idea of national solidarity rather than demonstrative nationalism have all been mentioned as elements of this unity and consensualism. However, the “consensus-Finland” as it existed until the 1990s has been accused of a strong emphasis on homogeneity and a low tolerance of difference. (Saukkonen 2003, 11–12).

Since the 1990s, Finland has undergone important changes which have affected its political system, administration and society (e.g. Saukkonen 2003, Haila & Le Galès 2005, Heiskala & Luhtakallio 2006, Sjöblom 2011). At the beginning of the 1990s, Finland experienced a severe economic depression in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, leading to high levels of unemployment. Even though Finland recovered from the depression, economic growth in the second half of 1990s was closely based on the success of the information and communication technology industry and its benefits were unevenly distributed, both geographically, benefiting big cities and certain areas inside them, and socially, leaving unemployed people with low education and a large percentage of newly arrived immigrants excluded (Haila & Le Galès 2005, Holstila 2007, 125). At state level, there was an increase in regional disparities simultaneous with ongoing rural emigration (Sandberg 2000). Many of the processes that started in the 1990s are still ongoing, and

the current situation in Finland is characterised by a new era of economic depression and austerity policies (which, nevertheless, are relatively little addressed in this study, as the data gathered dates mainly from the years 2008–2009). In big cities such as Helsinki, the processes of uneven development, unemployment and immigration are seen to increase the risk of social and residential segregation, which was a non-issue in Finnish politics before the 1990s (see Holstila 2007, 127, Vaattovaara & Kortteinen 2012).

The consensual features of the political system have been in a process of change since the 1980s and 1990s. First, the role of neocorporatist arrangements has diminished (Sjöblom 2011, 244). A similar development has occurred in Sweden, where the corporatist system has been replaced by a growing pluralisation and alternative political strategies for organisations to influence political decision-making (Hermansson et al. 1999). The 1990s also marked a change in the relatively homogenous civil society (Saukkonen 2003, Haila & Le Galès 2005). Even though the number of immigrants is still relatively low compared to other European countries, the change since the early 1990s has been big, especially in big cities and in certain areas within them. At the same time, Finnish civil society in general has become more pluralised and individualised, which is seen for instance in political participation and in Finnish associations (Sjöblom 2006b, Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009). During the 2000s, the system of political parties has experienced changes with the rise in popularity of the right-wing populist Finns Party (previously translated as True Finns), especially in the 2011 and 2015 parliamentary elections where they received 19.1 % and 17.7 % of the votes, respectively, and the status of third (in 2011) or second (in 2015) biggest party in Parliament (and a place in the Finnish government in 2015). Especially since my fieldwork was conducted in 2008–2009, there have been indications that Finnish society has become more divided and polarised than it was. According to Westinen (2015), there are indications of a new cleavage based on class and education, which in practice is focused around the issues of immigration, European integration and minorities. More broadly, this can also be seen as a division on the value liberal versus conservative axis, also evident in many other Western countries (Gallagher et al. 2011, 302–304).

During the last 25 years, the Finnish public administration has been characterised by continuous reforms, many of which have primarily been felt at local level. Most importantly, these reforms have been influenced by the ideas of New Public Management, with elements such as decentralisation, outsourcing, market-based policy instruments and performance management. (See Rose & Ståhlberg 2005, Sjöblom 2011, Ahonen 2013.) However, a minor strand in the reforms has concerned citizen participation and the interaction between citizens and the public administration (see next subchapter). In the reforms of the late 1980s and the beginning of 1990s, the emphasis was primarily on deregulation in all sectors and at all levels of government. This process was already under way in the second half of 1980s, but the economic depression of the early 1990s was regarded as further legitimising

deregulation and administrative reforms both nationally and locally. (Heiskala & Luhtakallio 2006.) The reforms meant a diminishing role for the state in the allocation of funding and more flexibility for the municipalities themselves in the provision of services. One of the central reform programmes of the period, The Free Commune Experiment, was started in 1989 and aimed to strengthen local autonomy, increase local participation and improve local services much in the same spirit as reform programmes in the other Nordic countries. Its key results were incorporated into the 1995 municipal act. (Rose & Ståhlberg 2005, Sjöblom 2011.)

In 1995, Finland joined the European Union, which had a strong influence on several policy sectors. The state regional administration was reformed in 1994 before accession. In regional and urban policies, the policies of the EU were directly applied and the corresponding national policies were organised along the same principles of programme- and project-based management (Mäkinen 1999). EU membership meant growing participation of national and local actors in international networks, which played an important role in the networking of cities and in the dissemination of policy ideas (cf. Le Galès 2002, Pinson 2009).

The reforms of the 2000s have impacted not only the size and number of municipalities but also the structures within which they collaborate and their role in service provision, along with the organisation of social and health services and the regional administration of the state (see e.g. Sjöblom 2011, Ahonen 2014, Ahonen forthcoming). These reforms have been related to issues such as the role of and economic constraints affecting the welfare state, demographics (as the post-war baby-boom generation ages) and ongoing rural emigration. In 2005, the government launched a project to restructure the provision of services and reduce the number of municipalities. This has led to a flurry of municipal mergers in the years 2007–2015, and there is political pressure for more of them in the near future. A more recent – and still ongoing – reform has concerned the organisation of social and health services. During the last few decades, the state regional administration has also been reorganised several times, most recently in 2010.

Generally, the explicit political reforms and the more discrete developments in the public administration have contributed to an increase in multi-actor partnerships and collaborative forms of governance (e.g. Anttiroiko et al. 2007, Bäcklund 2007, Godenhjelm et al. 2012, Sjöblom et al. forthcoming). In recent debate, administrative changes have even been accused of leading to a “consultant democracy” in which considerable public power is in fact in the hands of external actors (Kuusela & Ylönen 2013). The increase in collaborative governance has been coupled with a proliferation of multi-actor programmes and projects in the public administration, which has arisen not only as a result of national policies but also from the role of the EU – especially in fields such as regional, urban and rural policy (Rantala & Sulkunen 2006, Holstila 2007, Godenhjelm et al. 2012, Sjöblom et al. forthcoming). For instance, during the programming period 2007–2013, over

18 000 EU projects were conducted in Finland. The growing use of projects as a form of action is a phenomenon that has affected several policy fields such as gender equality work (Brunila 2009), employment (Kivelä et al. 2007) and social policy (Alavaikko 2006). In addition, projectification has strongly impacted associations, which have to a growing extent adapted to the exigencies of project funding and chosen strategies compatible with project logic (Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009; see also Matthies 2000).

One theme in the recent administrative reforms has been the development of citizen participation and the interaction between citizens and public authorities. The next subchapter will concentrate on the state of Finnish democracy and on the initiatives to increase citizen participation that have been conducted since the 1990s.

3.1.2 THE STATE OF FINNISH DEMOCRACY AND INITIATIVES TO INCREASE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The deep political and social changes of the 1990s, most of all the economic depression, led to growing scepticism around political institutions, politicians and the possibilities of influencing decision-making (Sjöblom 2011, 251). In Finland, the decline in electoral turnout over the past 30 years has been more dramatic than in most other Western countries (Sjöblom 2011, 250, see also Borg 2013, 18). However, during the 2000s, the decline was less dramatic than before; there was even a rise for the 2011 parliamentary elections. In a Nordic comparison, electoral turnout is lower in Finland than in the other countries, standing at the moment at under 70 % in parliamentary elections. In municipal elections, turnout is lower than at national elections at under 60 %. The reasons for the declining turnout are, among other things, the decrease in party identification and in the weakening of belief in voting as a civic duty. In practice, however, there are big differences between population groups and geographical areas. (Borg 2013.)

As with the changes in turnout, confidence in political institutions and actors as measured in attitude surveys declined sharply in the 1990s (Borg 2013, Sjöblom 2011, 250). However, in the analysis, it is important to distinguish between the support that democracy enjoys as a basic value, which has been high in surveys, and attitudes towards the actual functioning of Finnish democracy (Borg 2013, 61, cf. Sjöblom 2006b). In the current situation, according to certain surveys, over half of the population is still characterised by an attitude of mistrust with regard to how democracy functions in Finland. In attitude surveys, for instance the police, the education system and the military are trusted very much or relatively much by over 80 percent of Finns (with over 90 % for the police), around 40 percent of whom trust the government and the EU, with only 15 percent trusting political parties. However, in longitudinal analyses levels of confidence in politics have risen slightly since the mid-1990s. This relates to both the commitment to democracy as a steering form and the functioning of Finnish democracy.

Interest in politics has grown, while the attitude that none of the existing parties serves respondents' interests became less common during the 2000s when compared to the figures for the 1990s. (Borg 2013.) This last point may be related in part to the growth of the right-wing populist Finns Party (formerly known in English as the True Finns), which has been able to attract some of those voters who had previously been sceptical of the existing political parties (cf. Borg 2013, 90).

Despite the mistrust towards political institutions, which is still relatively pronounced, Finland has maintained high levels of social capital (Helander 2006, Sjöblom 2011). This is visible in high association rates among Finns (Helander 2006, see also Borg 2013). Labour union membership also remains high from an international perspective. Studies on participation show that citizens use a variety of tools and forms of action to influence political decision-making or more concretely their environs and local services. These include signing petitions, answering user surveys, attending school and kindergarten meetings, political consumption, and (less commonly) attending demonstrations. (Borg 2013, see also Sjöblom 2006b.) However, there are variations in how these different forms of action are used by different groups, and there is a tendency for multiple forms of participation and influence to be employed by those who are already active (e.g. Sjöblom 2006b).

During the last four or five decades, there has been a long-term change in the role of the citizens vis-à-vis the administration. Much of the Finnish public administration was developed in the 19th century during the Russian era. The administration deployed considerable political and administrative power, which was associated with a strong legalistic framework, while the citizen was for the most part relegated to the role of an administrative subject. This background is still said to affect the administrative culture and the interaction between citizens and the administration. (Nousiainen 1998, 337, Saukkonen 2003, 18.) However, since the 1960s–1970s, there has been a shift towards more individual and direct citizen participation, with concurrent changes in citizens' attitudes as they have started to see themselves more as citizens and less as subjects and the state more as a provider of services and less as an authority (Nousiainen 1998, Saukkonen 2003, Sjöblom 2011). Recent technological developments in the field of information and communication technology have probably served to further accelerate this development, even if there are significant cleavages between population groups (Pessala 2009).

The current development of the Finnish third sector and civil society is characterised by two different trajectories: first, the role of the third sector in the provision of services – in other words, co-production – and second, the development of new forms of participation and interaction between citizens and public authorities (Luhtakallio 2008; cf. Kuokkanen 2004). From the first perspective, the role of associations in service provision is not new in the Nordic countries: associations were active before the rise of the welfare state and they had some delegated duties in the welfare state era (see e.g. Eikås & Selle 2003, Rothstein 2003). However, their role in the implementation of

public policy has strengthened in the last few decades in the Nordic countries and more generally (Götz & Hackmann 2003). In Finland, especially after the economic crisis of the 1990s, there were high expectations for the third sector to help in the areas of service provision, employment and “employability” for vulnerable groups (e.g. Siisiäinen et al. 2000, Kuokkanen 2004). According to Siisiäinen and Kankainen (2009), recent changes in the Finnish association field are characterised by a reduction in the number of explicitly political associations. At the same time, there is an increase in what Siisiäinen and Kankainen call the “managerial” forms of action that certain associations choose to follow, which means a growth in activity to seek project funding and the use of strategies that are compatible with the principles of project management.

In the other Nordic countries, the existing research on voluntary organisations shows a tendency towards centralisation, professionalisation and bureaucratisation proceeding alongside a trend of falling numbers of members, fewer local member associations and reduced financial autonomy (Tranvik & Selle 2008, 17–18). Tranvik and Selle (2008) see this shift from a “voluntary” to an “administrative” culture particularly starkly at the level of the central organisations, where it is predicated by a broader administrative and economic framework bringing growing projectification and tighter financial constraints. However, the authors state that the relationship between the “voluntary” and “administrative” cultures is more complex than the current literature presupposes and includes both contradictory and mutually reinforcing elements. According to the Finnish literature, there are complex interrelationships among the various roles performed by associations (Siisiäinen 1996). For instance, projects have been seen in earlier research as arenas where the so-called “economic” role (in service production and employment) and “ethical” role (as sites for participation and channelling opinions) of associations have coincided (Matthies 2000, see also Kuokkanen 2004, Kuokkanen & Vihinen 2009).

Besides the increasing role of the third sector in service provision, another broad trend in state–civil society relations concerns the development of new forms of participation (Luhtakallio 2008). Many of the administrative reforms in central government conducted during the last 25 years have included measures to increase direct citizen participation both nationally and locally. Although the Free Commune Experiment, started in 1989, concentrated mainly on municipal deregulation, it did include measures to improve citizen participation at that level. Its results were institutionalised in the 1995 Municipal Act, which emphasised the participation of residents to a greater extent than its predecessor, including representation of service users in municipal bodies, options to develop sub-municipal administrative structures, and opportunities to organise local hearings, citizen initiatives and referendums at municipal level. (Sjöblom 2011, 255.)

According to Salminen and Wilhelmsson (2013, 10), the development of participation during the 1995–1999 government was based primarily on

individual projects. In 1997–2001, the national government conducted an initiative called the Participation Project, which was implemented in municipalities on a voluntary basis. The participating municipalities organised a range of projects to develop local participation with state funding, in particular creating new participation opportunities for young people such as youth councils (Sjöblom 2011, 255–256). Under the following government 1999–2003, the development of participation was related to a broad restructuring of the central administration. Measures to increase citizen participation included the Hear the Citizen project, which gathered information on efforts from other countries and gave recommendations on the development of citizen participation and the role of NGOs in policy preparation. At the turn of the millennium, the central administration opened up its databases and created a new interactive portal for citizen feedback. (Salminen & Wilhelmsson 2013, 10–11.) During the same period, the new Land Use and Planning Law, which came into force in 2000, strengthened the role of direct citizen participation in the planning process, much in line with the idea of communicative planning (e.g. Bäcklund et al. 2002, Staffans 2004).

During the 2003–2007 government, participation and democracy became an important cross-sectoral issue because of the Citizen Participation Policy Programme undertaken by central government between 2004 and 2007 (Salminen & Wilhelmsson 2013, 10). The programme originated from concerns about falling voter turnout and political participation and aimed to develop representative democracy and direct forms of citizen participation and increase levels of civic education (Bäcklund 2007, Keränen 2007, Sjöblom 2011). One of its main results was the institutionalisation of democracy policy in central government as a specific policy field (see Salminen & Wilhelmsson 2013, 12).

In 2007 and 2010, the national government approved two decisions in principle aimed at developing the status of NGOs and the democratic system (Salminen & Wilhelmsson 2013, 12). The decision in principle from 2007 aimed to clarify the role of NGOs in service provision and in policy preparation, while that from 2010 included measures in the fields of representative democracy and voting, participation, civic education and democracy policy (Oikeusministeriö 2010). At the same time, the government started a programme to promote electronic services. Among more recent reforms is that of the Finnish Constitution in 2011, which included the introduction of direct citizens' initiatives at the national level. The government 2011–2015 conducted several projects which were at least partly related to the issue of citizen participation – such as the programme for open information, the development of the language to be used by public authorities, and reforms of the municipal structure and central administration. (Salminen & Wilhelmsson 2013, 10.)

In 2014, the Finnish government approved a Democracy Policy Report which includes an overview of the existing situation (mainly based on the report by Borg 2013 referred to above) and sets guidelines for the further

development of the field. According to the policy report, there is a need to concentrate on the functioning of representative democracy by developing the electoral process and in municipal politics, by strengthening the role of elected politicians and political steering. Direct democracy will be bolstered by further developing municipal referendums and through national and municipal citizens' initiatives. The openness of the administration will be enhanced by opening databases, developing consultation processes, educating public officials to engage in more interactive policy preparation and developing communication via social media. There is also a need to develop collaboration between the administration and the civil society "according to a partnership principle". This means, *inter alia*, the clarification of processes relating to collaboration with associations. As with earlier policy programmes, the Democracy Policy Report emphasises civic education and information, and collaboration between public authorities and citizens. (Oikeusministeriö 2014, 9–10.)

The factors driving the so-called "participatory turn" in public administration have been similar in Finland to those in other Western countries – the decline in electoral turnout, trust in political institutions, and membership of political parties and traditional mass movements, coupled with the growing trend towards individualisation and the opportunities presented by new technologies identified above (see e.g. Borg 2006, 2013, Sjöblom 2011, 251; Oikeusministeriö 2014). Even though a big part of the discussion has concentrated on electoral turnout, the direct involvement of citizens has been conceived as a way of revitalising democracy in much the same spirit as in the current literature on democratic theory and democratic innovations (Bäcklund 2007, Keränen 2007, Sjöblom 2011; see also Chapter 2.3). For instance the recent Democracy Policy Report depicts a shift "from representation towards a more interactive democracy" (Oikeusministeriö 2014, 9). In the report, the involvement of citizens is also related to openness and transparency in public administration, which has been one of the central discourses in the recent NPM-oriented administrative reforms (Erkkilä 2010). Simultaneous with the development of direct citizen participation has been a tendency to promote and steer the participation of NGOs, which have traditionally had a consultative role in the Finnish political system. However, as was noted above, the strengthening of the role of NGOs includes other primarily economic motivations, such as co-producing services and, to some extent, creating jobs and promoting the employability of vulnerable groups (Siisiäinen et al. 2000, Kuokkanen 2004, Luhtakallio 2008).

In the current situation, the issue of participation is strongly present in political rhetoric from the platforms of national government to the strategies of municipalities. However, it is worth noting that the issues as such are often not new and have been already addressed in debate and in some of the political initiatives of the 1970s and 1980s (Bäcklund 2007, 20). The public administration has increasingly emphasised direct citizen involvement at various administrative levels and across policy fields such as land use and

planning, urban, rural, regional and environmental policy, social work and the development of public services, to name but a few (Bäcklund et al. 2002, Nousiainen 2011, Bamberg 2012, Laitinen & Niskala 2013, Häikiö & Leino 2014b). Some forms of participation have been targeted at special groups like children and youth (Wilhelmsson 2011, Kallio et al. 2015). Municipalities have created various models of participation and interaction such as Internet-based forms of consultation and decision-making structures at the sub-municipal level (Bäcklund 2007, Bamberg 2012). Besides more established practices, there have been various short-term programmes, projects and initiatives funded by a diverse range of authorities that have included and further developed participatory arrangements (Häikiö 2005, Niemenmaa 2005, Kuokkanen forthcoming a).

The overall picture of the various participatory practices is highly fragmented and information about them is not gathered systematically (Bäcklund 2007, 19–20). According to Bäcklund (*ibid.*), many of the initiatives have centred on the practical arrangements of how to organise participation, and there has not been enough discussion about the role of participation in the wider context of representative democracy and municipal administration. A general challenge in the development of citizen participation noted in political reports and the research is that resources tend to aggregate towards those who are already active (Oikeusministeriö 2014, 9, cf. Chapter 2.3). In addition, making effective use of the results of individual participatory projects in regular administration has proved difficult (Häikiö 2005, Bäcklund 2007, 19, 40). In line with the international discussion, some Finnish researchers have been worried about the depoliticisation of democracy as it becomes a specific policy field and a development object (Keränen 2007, Palonen 2009, cf. Perälä, 2015; see also Chapter 2.3).

Despite the proliferation and fragmentation of participatory schemes, there has been a simultaneous development towards a specific field of “democracy policy” in public administration, especially at national level (Wilhelmsson 2011; for a critical analysis see Perälä 2015). The research done in this study indicates that even in municipalities, there seems to be a somewhat growing tendency towards the coordination of participation and democracy, visible for instance in the organisation of external municipal Internet sites and in the work of municipal officials on the issue of participation. Especially since 2010 there has been a parallel development of new forms of urban bottom-up citizen activism – ranging from networks and Facebook groups providing alternative solutions in the urban planning process groups to neighbourhood-level flea markets, festivals, community gardening and shared workrooms (e.g. Hernberg 2012, Alatalo 2015, Mäenpää & Faehnle 2015, Willman 2015).

If this subchapter has concentrated on Finland as a whole, the next will look at the specific policy field of urban policy in the Finnish context. An interrelated but distinct theme is the development of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region.

3.2 FINNISH URBAN POLICY AND METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE IN THE HELSINKI REGION

This subchapter will concentrate initially on the issue of urban policy, which arose in Finland as a distinct policy field in the 1990s, much in line with the broader logic of “new urban policies” as implemented in other European countries. It will then go on to consider the special case of the development of the Helsinki Region, which has been characterised by a high level of uncertainty and conflict. These two areas will constitute the themes presented in this subchapter.

3.2.1 THE BIRTH OF EXPLICIT URBAN POLICY IN THE 1990S

Finland, like the other Nordic countries, has in the post-war era been characterised by the principle of a universal welfare state, leading to relatively uniform solutions at the local level, redistributive regional policies targeted at worse-off peripheral regions, and limits to the growth of the biggest cities (Schulman 2000, Moisio 2012, cf. Brenner 2004). Other characteristics of the system are the broad, legally defined responsibilities of municipalities and a highly specialised and sectorised form of administration both at national and municipal levels. Until the 1990s, urban policies in the Nordic countries were implicit and focused on housing, transport and environmental issues and on balancing urban and rural development and preventing excessive growth in the metropolitan regions (Schulman 2000, 24). In Finland, a specific urban policy did not enter the political agenda until the 1990s. Reasons adduced for this are the relatively low level of specifically urban problems; the working logic of the universal welfare state; the sector-based public administration; the high level of legal responsibilities falling to municipalities; the principle of social mixing in housing policy; and the highly political urban-rural divide (Schulman 2000, Holstila 2007, Moisio 2012).

The issue of a specific urban policy, which rose onto the political agenda in Finland in the 1990s, can be related to the broader social, political and economic changes of the period. The most important driver for an explicit urban policy was Finland’s EU membership and, to some extent, its participation in international urban policy networks and the example of other countries, as many European states were already conducting national urban policy initiatives by the mid-1990s (see e.g. Holstila 2007, van den Berg et al. 2007b). The issue of urban policy was high on the political agenda of the European Union in the mid-1990s, with active discussion, networks of urban actors and the URBAN Community Initiative, which had started as a Union-wide initiative in 1994 after a pilot phase (van den Berg et al. 2007e). Other international organisations such as the OECD actively contributed to the discussion on urban policy.

As was seen in Chapter 3.1, the 1990s in Finland were also a period of profound social, political and economic turmoil. Globalisation and growing

inter-urban competition; the increasingly onerous economic burden borne by municipalities coupled with growing flexibility in the way services were produced; growing numbers of immigrants in cities and especially in certain neighbourhoods; ongoing migration from the countryside; growing attention to environmental questions; declining turnout in elections; the growth of information and communication technology based industry in the second half of the 1990s – all these factors had a significant impact in transforming Finnish cities (Bradley et al. 2004, Haila & Le Galès 2005, Holstila 2007). Politically, the rise of urban policies – especially economically oriented policies, which have been prevalent in Finland – has also been linked to the strengthening of neoliberal ideology, with a growing emphasis on issues of urban competitiveness and the principles of New Public Management (Pelkonen 2008, Moisio 2012).

The issue of urban policy found its way onto the political agenda at the same time as a broader shift in Finnish regional policy took place, one which was greatly affected by Finland's membership of the EU (Vartiainen 1998, Mäkinen 1999, Moisio 2012). In his analysis, Sami Moisio (2012) sees broad long-term trends in the relationship between the state and the local levels, starting from the relatively limited "areal state" of the pre-war era, followed by the decentred welfare state built from the 1950s onwards. According to Perttu Vartiainen (1998), the period of the decentred welfare state can be further divided into a period of industrialisation of developing regions, which characterised the policy until the mid-1970s, and a period of regional planning which continued from the mid-1970s through to the late 1980s. However, in the 1990s, the priorities and the tools of Finnish regional policy changed. EU membership was the biggest driver for change, as before membership Finnish regional policy was overhauled to bring it into line with the EU's programme- and project-based regional policy. (Vartiainen 1998, Mäkinen 1999, Moisio 2012.)

During the same period, the state-based, resource-allocation approach shifted more towards stressing endogenous growth, local strengths and responsibility at local level (Mäkinen, 1999: 14–15, Moisio 2012). These changes affected the way in which cities were viewed in the national economy. From a period in which cities had been a somewhat anonymous category within the welfare state (cf. Le Galès 2005) whose growth was even subject to restriction, there was a considerable shift towards one in which the role of cities as "motors" of local and national economic growth was highlighted (Holstila 2007, Moisio 2012, cf. Brenner 2004). According to this logic, the growth of cities should not be limited, as they were important in global economic competition and as sites of new knowledge and innovation. Similar developments have been reported from other Nordic countries (Nilsson 2007, Matthiessen 2007, see also Kuokkanen 2005).

In the Finnish context, what has been referred to as a specific "urban policy" has consisted of multi-actor development programmes which have been realised through projects and employed in parallel with the regular

municipal administration (see e.g. Holstila 2007). The history of Finnish urban policy is an example of programme- and project-based development which has many elements in common with the broader framework of the urban and regional policies of the EU. However, the Finnish context can from a European perspective be characterised by strong municipalities with broad public responsibilities, leaving less room for manoeuvre for specific urban policies (Holstila 2007, van den Berg et al. 2007d).

In comparison with elsewhere in Europe, Finnish urban policy has been strongly oriented towards the development of competitiveness, and there have been fewer programmes and projects that might be labelled social urban policy (Bradley et al. 2004, Holstila 2007, see also Pelkonen 2008, Moisio 2012). Social policy in cities has generally been the responsibility of the municipal administration, and the principle of social mixing has been used as a central tool in the prevention of segregation (see e.g. Vaattovaara & Kortteinen 2012). There have nevertheless been some EU level, national and local political initiatives targeted at the prevention of segregation, such as the URBAN Community Initiative of the European Union, implemented in Finland between the years 1995–2006 (and after 2006, as an urban dimension of the Structural Fund policy), along with several initiatives to develop suburbs. The issue of social segregation is also present in the current political debate on the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region (see e.g. Tolkki et al. 2011, cf. Vaattovaara & Kortteinen 2012).

An explicit urban policy in Finland started in the mid-1990s. In summer 1995, half a year after Finland joined the EU, a working group on urban policy was set up by the Ministry of the Interior. The group made a proposal concerning the development policies needed by Finnish cities in 1996, titled “Cities as creators of growth” (Kaupunkien kehittämistyöryhmä 1996), which promoted the logic of cities as motors of the national and local economies. An urban dimension was also present in the Centre of Expertise Programme, launched in 1994, which was primarily an instrument of regional policy. The programme was part of a shift in regional policy, away from the ideology of local balance and support for weaker areas towards the idea of local strengths for each area and endogenous development (Holstila 1998). Urban environmental policies also made it onto the political agenda, with a report from the Ministry of Environment (Kaupunkipolitiikan työryhmä 1995) and the Local Agenda 21 work at municipal level (Häikiö 2005, Niemenmaa 2005).

In 1997, the Finnish national government launched specific Urban Programmes as instruments for programme- and project-based urban policy. According to Holstila’s overview (2007, 134–135), the Urban Programmes were chosen after two open application rounds and in all 27 programmes were funded. Even though in principle the programmes concentrated on economic, social and ecological urban development, their main emphasis was on the competitiveness of urban regions. In practice, the programmes covered a number of goals including the promotion of expertise and internationalisation, developing the urban environment and infrastructure, improving housing and

traffic management, and enhancing social well-being in cities and city culture, along with encouraging interaction between urban and rural areas. An evaluation of the early programmes showed mixed results. They were criticised for lacking a clear vision and well-defined goals, and the projects included had been large, ill-defined and to an extent unrealistic, with some ending prematurely. At the same time, the evaluation emphasised the catalytic effects of the programmes in creating a new arena for cooperation and for the development of competitiveness in the regions. (Holstila 2007, 134–135.)

In 2000, the national working group on urban policy appointed by the Finnish government suggested a new form of programme policy, which however, did not use the notion of urban policy but was called the Regional Centre Programme. According to Holstila (2007, 135), the Helsinki Region was excluded from the programme because of the specific challenges it presented. The Regional Centre Programmes tied urban development into a regional political framework, much in line with the ideas of endogenous development and local strengths. However, unlike the earlier tradition of redistributive regional policy, the Regional Centre Programme was based on the idea that the regional centres would act as “motors” of regional development. Because the programme covered the majority of Finnish urban regions (with the exception of the Helsinki Region and the smallest cities), whether this programme was in fact a tool for a specific urban policy or rather a form of regional policy has been questioned. (Holstila 2007, 135.)

The issues of democracy and citizen participation have not been strongly present in Finnish programme-based urban policy (cf. Holstila 2007, van den Berg et al. 2007d). However, Finnish urban policy, like its international counterparts, has been characterised by the existence of partnerships and networks (van den Berg et al. 2007d, 415–416). Those programmes and projects aimed at developing suburbs conducted since the 1990s (and to some extent, even earlier ones, cf. Bäcklund 2007, 20) have been based on ideas of participation and empowerment (Kuokkanen forthcoming a, see also Bäcklund & Schulman 2003). More generally, as was noted in Chapter 3.1, many of the participatory reforms and initiatives of recent decades have impacted the local level, and municipalities have developed their own channels and models of citizen participation and feedback.

During the last few years, the programme-based approach seems to be, if not in decline, at least in transition in the state’s regional and urban policies, partly because of the straitened economic situation. The Centre of Expertise Programme, started in 1994, concluded at the beginning of 2013. The Regional Centre Programmes and the Urban Programmes, which were implemented in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and in Central and Western Uusimaa (Mäenpää et al. 2010), were replaced in 2010 with a national Cohesion and Competitiveness Programme, which was supposed to continue to 2013 with a view to creating a more coherent and nationally coordinated framework for the urban and regional policies. At the end of 2011, however, the state announced that the programme would be brought to an end for financial

reasons. The state nevertheless still conducts both national and EU-funded regional development programmes, some of which have an urban dimension – such as the EU Structural Fund programmes, the Six City Strategy for the six biggest cities and the national Innovative Cities (INKA) programme (see EURA 2014, 6aika, Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2014).

In Finnish programme-based urban policies, the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region have been an exceptional case. The next subchapter will concentrate on Urban Programmes conducted in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, and on the more recent developments around the issue of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region.

3.2.2 THE SPECIAL CASE OF THE HELSINKI REGION

The Helsinki Region has been a special case in the Finnish urban policy because of its status, its size and the specific political, economic and social issues facing the biggest metropolitan region in Finland. The Helsinki Metropolitan Area consists of Helsinki, the capital of Finland, and the municipalities of Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen. Helsinki has over 620 000 inhabitants, Espoo around 264 000 and Vantaa around 210 000. The small municipality of Kauniainen, situated entirely within Espoo, has around 9200 inhabitants. However, the functional urban area around Helsinki is much wider, and in the current situation, a total of 14 municipalities are counted in the wider Helsinki Region, with a total of over 1.4 million residents – approximately a quarter of the whole Finnish population. (Helsingin kaupunki, Tietokeskus 2014.)

In general, the urban and metropolitan policies of the Helsinki Region can be seen as a mixture of both state- and municipally-driven actions, much like what has been presented in the earlier international literature (Brenner 2004, Le Galès 2005, van den Berg et al. 2007a, Pinson 2009; see also Chapter 2.5). In the words of Holstila (2007, 133), who has been one of the central figures in the formulation of the Finnish urban policy, the “key idea of Finnish urban policy is that the task of the state is to ensure that cities themselves can solve their own problems and respond to challenges that they face”. At the same time, urban and metropolitan policy in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and broader Helsinki Region have been strongly interconnected with the development of metropolitan governance structures for the area. However, the political processes have been slow and conflictual even if the political debate has recently intensified.

A state-of-the-art of the situation in the 1990s and early 2000s was presented in the analysis by Haila and Le Galès (2005). According to them, disparities among the four municipalities and the conflict between the dominant city, Helsinki, and the city of Espoo had shaped the debate on metropolitan governance. The political parties, with different representations across the four municipalities, had differing views about the development of the metropolitan region: the social democrats concentrated more on issues

such as housing, control of land use, and the management of public services, while the conservatives defended the idea of social and spatial differentiation. However, a common rationale for the policy was the defence of the region against small town and rural interests and the state.

According to Haila and Le Galès (2005), the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was characterized by a melange of different issues, networks and governance styles. These included interdependence and professional networks in the context of social services and housing; a highly technocratic organisation called the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Council (Pääkaupunkiseudun Yhteistyövaltuuskunta, YTV, reorganised later into several sector-based organisations) in the context of utilities such as waste management, public transport planning and air pollution; and forms of cooperation and competition in the context of economic development. Generally speaking, the metropolitan governance was characterized by a mix of robust governments (the four municipalities) and dynamic metropolitan networks. The issue of democracy was not at the forefront of discussion. The prevailing view was that the metropolitan level was not a level for democracy and should not be so, as democracy was embedded within the municipalities. This, however, stood in contrast with the growth in importance of governance networks across the region. (ibid.)

During the first decade of the 2000s, political pressure from the state towards the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region to deepen their metropolitan cooperation increased significantly, and new forms of metropolitan cooperation were created. There were three, interlinked developments: cooperation among non-elected municipal officials through joint programmes; cooperation among elected politicians; and the creation of a common framework of strategic steering. The period also saw the development of a national metropolitan policy and agreements between the municipalities in the Helsinki Region and the state in areas such as land use, housing and transport.

During the formulation phase of the national Regional Centre Programmes, the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was not included because of the specificities of the area (Holstila 2007, 135). Partly as a consequence of that, the mayors in the region launched their own specific multi-actor development programme called the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (which will be presented more thoroughly in the empirical part of this study, most of all in Chapter 5.1). The Urban Programme was one of the first attempts to create a dialogue about common urban and metropolitan policies for the four municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, which had long been characterised by a situation of competition tempered by certain forms of inter-municipal collaboration (Haila & Le Galès 2005). The first programme covered the years 2002–2004, and the second (which is studied in this research) was conducted in 2005–2007. The period of urban development programmes for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area continued until the beginning of 2012, with a third, transitional Urban Programme running from 2008 to

2010 and a nationally implemented Regional Cohesion and Competitiveness (CoCo) Programme from 2010 to early 2012, ending prematurely for financial reasons. The cessation of this programme drew to a close a decade of programmatic development of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (Lahti 2012).

As will be noted in the empirical part of this study (especially Chapter 5.1), the Urban Programmes, like more recent developments in metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region, were driven by two main factors. These were, on the one hand, the strong pressure for metropolitan cooperation from state level – to which the municipalities reacted by creating new forms of collaboration; and on the other, the existence of specific policy issues that could not it was believed be solved with the existing sector- and municipality-based forms of administration. The Urban Programmes were development programmes based on partnerships between the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, the state, the regional administration and some of the established collaboration structures of the cities together with other public or semi-public actors, with non-elected municipal officials playing an important role. These programmes were implemented through projects which aimed to increase regional cooperation and organising capacities through the creation of pilots and new models of action.

In an evaluation of the period of Urban Programmes for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area from 2002 to 2010 and the Regional Cohesion and Competitiveness Programme that followed from 2010 to early 2012, Tanja Lahti (2012) sees the expectations raised as being excessive in relation to the scope of the programmes and the resources available to them. The programmes remained distant and unknown to the public, which impacted the range of project proposals offered to them. As funding instruments, the programmes were quite flexible. They also had a strong management group, but the partnerships developed through the programmes remained relatively limited. The results achieved by individual projects were often minimal. Despite these problems, the programmes served to increase collaboration, partnerships and networking among the actors involved.

Alongside the Urban Programmes, there was a parallel development in political structures and common strategies. In 2004, a collaboration organ called the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Advisory Board was created, consisting of high-level elected municipal officials from the four municipalities. A strategic framework was created for the development of the region, and a common vision for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was approved for the first time in the same year. In 2006, the councils of the four municipalities organised a joint meeting for a first time. In the broader Helsinki region, the 14 municipalities have had collaboration meetings since 2005 and approved a common vision for the region in 2009. (HelsinginSeutu.fi.)

The formulation of a national metropolitan policy rose onto the political agenda in the early 2000s. The priorities for a cross-sectoral metropolitan policy at national level were finally set at the end of 2007 and they concerned the development of administrative structures, land use, housing and

transport, the promotion of international competitiveness and issues of immigration and social cohesion. In practice, metropolitan policy has consisted of agreements, letters of intent and joint programmes between the state and the municipalities of the Helsinki Region in these policy fields. (Metropolipolitiikka – haasteena Helsingin seudun erityispiirteet.) At the same time, there has been a review of the municipal and service structure for the Helsinki Region.

In the last few years, the debate on the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region has both deepened and broadened. The issues addressed in the current discussion on metropolitan governance are clearly broader than those in the Urban Programmes. They include the competitiveness of the region and associated economic and innovation policies, land use, housing, transport, residential segregation, employment, and immigration. At the same time, according to one of the models presented, urban planning should be transferred to the metropolitan level. (Rakennepoliittinen ohjelma talouden kasvuedellytysten vahvistamiseksi ja julkisen talouden kestävyysvajeen umpeen kuromiseksi 2013, 18.) Geographically, the alternatives presented cover not only the Helsinki Metropolitan Area but also neighbouring municipalities in the Helsinki Region, ranging from 10 to 16 depending on the model (Valtiovarainministeriö 2014, 81).

Institutionally, it may be said that the different forms of metropolitan governance presented in earlier literature (see Chapter 2.5) have to some extent followed one another in the organisation of governance of the Helsinki Region. The initial situation was one of competition between the municipalities. Since the early 2000s, there has been growing pressure to create multi-actor networks for the area, and in recent developments, there is pressure towards institutional consolidation. Even though in Finland, there is a long tradition of intermunicipal cooperation in policy fields such as health care or education (e.g. Holstila 2007, 128), the current policy reforms have led or will lead to both increased inter-municipal forms of collaboration and actual municipal mergers. This development extends to the debate on metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and broader Helsinki Region. In 2007, the state showed that it would go as far as to use coercion in matters of municipal mergers and metropolitan governance, with the national government deciding on the annexation of part of the municipality of Sipoo to Helsinki against the will of Sipoo.

In January 2013, a report on the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region presented three different models. The first was based on small changes to the existing municipalities and the creation of a strong, elected metropolitan-level administration. The second included more municipal mergers especially in the areas neighbouring Helsinki, with a non-elected metropolitan administration based around reorganisation of existing forms of cooperation. The third proposed the merger of the cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area into one big municipality, another large amalgamation for the neighbouring municipalities, and some limited form of interaction

between these new super municipalities. (Metropolialueen esiselvitys 2013.) In August 2013, the national government decided as part of a broader structural policy programme that there would be both municipal mergers and a metropolitan administration in the Helsinki Region. Ultimate decision-making for the metropolitan administration would be in the hands of a directly elected metropolitan council. (Rakennepoliittinen ohjelma talouden kasvuedellytysten vahvistamiseksi ja julkisen talouden kestävyysvajeen umpeen kuromikseksi 2013, 17–18.)

In the structural policy programme of 2013, the government set the beginning of 2015 as the deadline for decisions. However, in the spring 2014, after an interim report from a working group on the development of metropolitan legislation (Valtiovarainministeriö 2014), the government divided over the issue of metropolitan governance. The report suggested two alternatives for metropolitan governance. The first one was to be based on a looser institutional framework under a statutory joint municipal authority, with a minimum of duties consisting mainly of strategic steering accompanied by significant changes to the municipal structure. The second alternative was to create a strong system of self-government at metropolitan level with wide responsibilities and its own tax raising powers, but with smaller changes to the municipal structure. Both models were to include an elected metropolitan council. (Valtiovarainministeriö 2014, 81.)

After the publication of the report, the minister from the National Coalition Party responsible for municipalities stated that she did not see the need for a special metropolitan government in a situation in which social and health services were being reformed towards a model based on regional social and health areas and inter-municipal cooperation (Helsingin Sanomat 16.4.2014). This position provoked a political debate both among and within political parties. In the latter half of 2014 and at the beginning of 2015, political debate on metropolitan governance intensified as the government's term came to an end. In February 2015, the dominant National Coalition Party announced that it did not support a model based on a separate metropolitan-level administration, unlike the Social Democrats who were also represented in the government (Helsingin Sanomat 13.2.2015). Before the parliamentary elections of 2015, the model of a metropolitan-level administration received support only from the Social Democratic and Green parties (Helsingin Sanomat 8.4.2015). However, a possible merger of the four cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was still present as an option (Helsingin Sanomat 19.3.2015).

Decisions on metropolitan governance were postponed to the next government and the issue for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region remains open for the moment. This was partly because the broad coalition government, which was riven by internal conflict, was unable to reach agreement on the issue. However, the issue was also bundled with broader reforms to municipal structure and the organisation of social and health services – which were equally controversial and similarly remained

unresolved (Helsingin Sanomat 26.3.2015). There is still a pressure for a shift from programme- and project-based cooperation to more robust forms of metropolitan governance, either as a new level of administration, through direct municipal mergers or via a combination of the two. At the same time, the issue of metropolitan governance persists in being highly contentious at both national and municipal level.

The issues of democracy and citizen participation have been secondary ones both in the Urban Programmes of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and in the broader metropolitan governance debate (e.g. Haila & Le Galès 2005, Giersig 2008, Taipale 2011, Jarva & Palonen 2012). However, they have always been present to a greater or lesser extent and their importance has risen during the last few years. The three Urban Programmes for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area implemented in the first decade of the 2000s included projects that focused at least in part on the issues of partnership, participation and democracy. In the recent debate on the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region, the issue of metropolitan democracy and participation has grown in importance. As was noted, in 2013 the government went so far as to take a decision on the establishment of an elected council at the metropolitan level, which was nevertheless not implemented. We will come back to this theme in the empirical part of the thesis.

In the next chapter, we will look at the methodology and data of the study. These include an overview of interpretive policy analysis as a general framework and the forms of data and methods used in this research.

4 METHODOLOGY AND DATA

This research is based on a case study, a policy programme implemented in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, and a participatory project that was part of the programme. Methodologically, the research is anchored in the wider context of interpretive policy analysis, which is understood here as a relatively broad framework for qualitative policy analysis (see also Häikiö & Leino 2014c). This chapter will consist of two parts: the presentation of interpretive policy analysis as a framework and the data and methods used in this study.

4.1 INTERPRETIVE POLICY ANALYSIS AS A FRAMEWORK

The analysis of an urban or metropolitan policy programme and a project included in it can be seen as a form of policy analysis (see also Kuokkanen 2014). Recently, several governance scholars have stated that traditional forms of policy analysis are not ideal for capturing increasingly multi-actor and networked forms of policy-making (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, see also Häikiö & Leino 2014b). This subchapter will concentrate on the field of interpretive policy analysis as a methodological framework.

According to Frank Fischer (2003), public policy studies have been one of the fastest growing specializations in social sciences over the last forty years. The field has emerged as a response to two concerns: first, a desire to better understand the policy-making process, and second, the need to provide scientific knowledge for political decision-making on specific policies. The second aim in particular led to the creation of a specific field, policy analysis, which emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. According to Dunn (1981, 35), policy analysis is “an applied social science discipline which uses multiple methods of inquiry and arguments to produce and transform policy-relevant information that may be utilized in political settings to solve policy problems”. It is characterized by an aspiration towards relevance, by normative premises (in recommending certain policies and programmes over others) and by action orientation (Goodin et al. 2006, 5–6).

According to Goodin et al. (2006, 3–4), policy analysis originally had a “high modernist” character, which meant technocratic hubris linked to a mission to make a better world and a confidence in the ability of researchers to measure and monitor that world and to succeed in the task of control (cf. Fischer 2003, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b). Policy problems were conceived as technical questions, resolvable by the systematic application of expertise. This “high modernist” agenda has been criticized since the 1970s by showing the limits to administration, control and implementation (Pressman & Wildavsky 1973, Hood 1976). However, critical policy analysts, at least in the United

States, still see the field as overly positivist and technocratic (Fischer 2003, Dryzek 2006).

Interpretive policy analysis can be seen as a result of several developments. In the United States, it has arisen as a counter-reaction to traditional policy analysis (see e.g. Fischer 2003), whereas in Europe, it is less conflict-laden and can be seen as a part of a relatively large body of qualitative research in social sciences (Wagenaar 2011). According to Hendrik Wagenaar (2011, 276–297), it is important that the way in which policy analysis is conducted fits the research object. He states that public policy is intrinsically indeterminate, heterogeneous, contested and action-driven. This is especially the case in the current collaborative and multi-actor forms of governance. According to Wagenaar, traditional “empiricist” policy analysis fails to take all these dimensions into account and interpretive forms of policy analysis are more suitable (ibid., 242; for similar forms of reasoning, see Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b).

Even if the various interpretive approaches differ from each other, interpretive policy analysis is generally based on three central characteristics. These are first, the use of qualitative and interpretive research methods (which are related to the broader issue of ontology); second, close connections with critical research and democratic theory; and third, a blurring of academic and practical forms of knowledge (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Wagenaar 2011, Häikiö & Leino 2014c).

The first characteristic of interpretive policy analysis is the use of qualitative and interpretive research methods. Especially in the United States, interpretive policy analysis is built on the criticism of conventional policy analysis, most importantly its “empiricist” or positivist agenda (see e.g. Yanow 2000, Fischer 2003, Dryzek 2006, 193–195). However, in European research, the use of interpretive policy analysis is less clearly tied up with an opposition between “positivist” and “interpretive” schools of thought and more to the recognition of the coexistence of different forms of research. Or, as Wagenaar (2011, 277) puts it, in policy analysis “different theories based on different epistemologies and ontologies illuminate different aspects of reality. They do not challenge each other. They simply coexist.” In European research, qualitative forms of policy analysis are *de facto* the most commonly used (Hill 2009, 10, Wagenaar 2011, 72). In general, interpretive policy analysis can be related to the “qualitative turn” of the 1980s and the 1990s in social sciences (see Rabinow & Sullivan 1979, Fischer & Forester 1993, Fischer 2003).

A second characteristic of interpretive policy analysis is its close connection to democratic theory and critical research (Fischer 2003, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Wagenaar 2011). Wagenaar (2011, 276) states that the most important contribution of interpretive policy analysis is its contribution to democracy. Going back to the post-war period, the original mission of mainstream policy analysis was, in the words of Lasswell (1951), to be a “policy science of democracy”. It would be accurate to say that interpretive policy analysis contributes to current governance research and to theories of deliberative and

participatory democracy, and may even actively serve to promote new forms of participation and deliberation (see e.g. Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a). Interpretive policy analysis is also closely connected to the more general critical research and is constantly suspicious of power and technocracy. For instance John Dryzek (2006, 191–192) emphasises the emancipatory dimension of critical policy analysis, where “the key task of the analysis is enlightenment of those suffering at the hands of power”. In a similar tone, scholars like Bent Flyvbjerg (2001) have vigorously criticized the way in which social sciences have imitated natural sciences instead of creating an epistemology of their own, based on practical reason and an emancipatory knowledge interest.

Interest in democracy is intertwined with the study of processes of politicisation and depoliticisation in the field of policy (Häikiö & Leino 2014c). As was noted in the pessimistic and optimistic approaches to governance and democracy (see Chapter 2.3), critical governance scholars see the consensual logic of governance as related to a process of depoliticisation (e.g. Mouffe 1993, 2000, Rosanvallon 2006), whereas researchers such as Warren (2009, see also Hajer 2003a, Häikiö 2005) perceive a process of politicisation or democratisation at the policy level and the re-interpretation of upper-level political strategies there. The same applies to interpretive policy analysis, which concentrates on openings and closures in the policy process and on opportunities to problematize issues, open them up for conflict, and exert influence during such openings (Häikiö & Leino 2014c, see also Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Luhtakallio 2010).

The third characteristic of interpretive policy analysis is the blurring of academic and practical forms of knowledge. The classical function of policy analysis is to provide information about policies to decision-makers, or in the words of Lasswell (1951), to “speak truth to power”. Policy analysis can provide information about policies in two ways. First, it can have an “enlightenment function” (Wagenaar 2011) and provide greater conceptual understanding on and clarification of a policy issue, what Hill (2009, 5) calls analysis of policy. Second, policy analysis can act as aid in decision-making (Wagenaar 2011), or in Hill’s words, analysis for policy. Even if many interpretive scholars have emphasised the pragmatic nature of interpretive policy analysis (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Häikiö & Leino 2014c), in general all forms of policy analysis are based on practical and concrete policy issues. However, interpretive scholars – especially in the American research – criticize mainstream policy analysis as being technocratic, pointing to the role of the policy analyst and the way in which he or she uses knowledge, and claiming that policy analysis seeks to attach itself to the frame of reference of the policy maker (Dryzek 2006, 190–191).

According to Hajer and Wagenaar (2003b), the practice-oriented character of interpretive policy analysis should reduce the gap between the theoretical rationality of the policy sciences and the practical rationality of the policy practitioner. The authors state that the rise of networked and collaborative

forms of governance has blurred the boundaries between the two rationalities, as policy making takes place in an increasingly network-based, conflictual, power-laden, uncertain, unpredictable and “muddy” situation. Thus “problems” and “decisions” become ever more complex, and Hajer and Wagenaar emphasise the importance of practical judgment in policy analysis and demand an active role of the researcher. However, according to Wagenaar (2011, 276), the majority of studies inside the field of interpretive policy analysis still “opt for the traditional role of the disinterested observer, who operates on a clear distinction between theory and practice, analysis, and prescription, who has privileged knowledge and who leaves it to the policy maker to use, or not use, the results of his work as he sees it.” Wagenaar sees two alternatives to this approach: action researchers, who work in close collaboration with the “objects” of the study and accord them an active role, and public policy mediators, who try to facilitate deliberation and help resolve disputes between conflicting groups.

Although interpretive policy analysis is used as an umbrella concept (see e.g. Yanow 2000), current policy analysis is characterised by a variety of interpretive approaches (Wagenaar 2011, see also Bevir 2011b). Wagenaar sees the biggest difference between these approaches as lying in how they understand meaning in the process of interpretation and makes a distinction between three understandings of meaning within the field, which he terms hermeneutic, discursive and dialogical. First, the forms of interpretive policy analysis which are based on hermeneutic meaning aim to analyse and clarify what is hidden “behind” a specific policy, and according to this logic, such an analysis can be conducted by analysing the experiences of policy actors (ibid., 71). Second, under the umbrella of discursive meaning, Wagenaar regroups various forms of discourse analysis, where influence from linguistic theory plays a central role. Put very simply, if in the hermeneutic school it can be said that the world is mediated by language, discursive forms of analysis make a much stronger assumption that the world is produced by language (ibid., 107). Finally, dialogical meaning emphasises the importance of everyday experience, the imperfect nature of individual understanding and the importance of dialogue between different understandings (ibid., 195–208). This last school of thought is most strongly based on active hands-on research, a dialogue between the researcher and the research objects and a strong commitment to empowerment and deliberation (for an overview, see Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a).

If the analysis of Wagenaar (2011) is simplified, it can be said that the two axes that separate the different schools of thought within interpretive policy analysis are their ontological assumptions and the way in which they see the role of the researcher. First, even if all the approaches place themselves at a clear distance from positivist forms of policy analysis, they differ in how they are situated on the axis ranging from positivism to social constructivism, i.e. in relation to the question of to what degree there is a world “out there” independently of how we perceive it and how it is shaped through interaction

between people. Second, the researcher can be “an academic outsider” or an actively involved action researcher or a facilitator in a deliberative process. According to Wagenaar (2011, 41), there is considerable overlap between the different forms of interpretive policy analysis. At the same time, many researchers conducting interpretive policy analysis – especially those in the hermeneutic tradition – are not necessarily aware of the epistemological and ontological assumptions behind their research (*ibid.*, 72).

Interpretive policy analysis has been criticized for being ideological rather than objective and analytical (Fischer 2003, x). However, the explicitly normative dimension of mainstream policy analysis has been underlined by Goodin et al. (2006), as the original mission of policy analysis was to give advice and to suggest and recommend certain policies over others. More implicit forms of normative assumptions lie in the “high modernist” mission and technocratic nature of public policy and policy analysis (*ibid.*). A more specific criticism of the interpretive approach lies in its linkages with democracy theory, especially with the notion of deliberative democracy, critiques of which have been presented more in detail in Chapter 2.3.

Especially in European research, there are considerable overlaps with interpretive policy analysis and governance research (see e.g. Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Bevir & Rhodes 2011, Häikiö & Leino 2014b). As was noted in Chapter 2.3, new forms of governance tend to develop at the policy level, and many policy analysts in fact deal with governance networks, projects, partnerships and similar phenomena. Although the methodological basis of governance studies is broader than that of interpretive policy analysis (e.g. Bogason & Zølner 2007), both schools emphasise a practice-oriented approach, based on empirical research (Sørensen and Torfing 2007a, 6) – often on qualitative case studies, at least in Europe (Hill 2009, Wagenaar 2011, Rhodes 2012). Moreover, an important element in both schools is the growing interest in democratic theory and in deliberative and participatory forms of democracy (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, see also Chapter 2.3). If this subchapter has concentrated on the general framework of interpretive policy analysis, the next subchapter will present the methods and data used in this study more thoroughly.

4.2 METHODS AND DATA IN THIS STUDY

Interpretive policy analysis is useful from the point of view of this research for several reasons (see also Kuokkanen 2014). One is the way in which current research in the field combines policy analysis, governance research and current developments in democratic theory (e.g. Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Mathur 2008, Bevir & Rhodes 2011). Many authors state that interpretive policy analysis is especially pertinent in the context of networked and collaborative forms of governance, while the more positivist versions of policy analysis come from the tradition of hierarchical administration (Hajer &

Wagenaar 2003b, Dryzek 2006, see also Bevir & Rhodes 2011). The interpretive approach is especially applicable when studying a specific policy case with a variety of actors and interests (see e.g. Häikiö & Leino 2014b). Even though conventional policy analysis has been American or American-inspired, much of the current interpretive policy analysis comes from a European context (Fischer 2003, 2).

In this study, there has been a deliberate choice to take some distance from disputes about ontology and epistemology, most vividly present in the “qualitative” versus “quantitative” studies debate in social sciences, but existing even within the interpretive community (as presented for instance by Wagenaar 2011). It is nevertheless useful to situate this study inside the broader field of interpretive policy analysis. Using the distinction given by Wagenaar (2011, 284) and Hill (2009, 5), the aim of this research is to provide clarification or enlightenment to a policy issue rather than to offer concrete assistance to political decision-making. In the research process, I have preferred to remain an academic “outsider”, not becoming an action researcher, facilitator or promoter of deliberative practices as advocated by Hajer and Wagenaar (2003b). Of the various forms of interpretive policy analysis, the type that Wagenaar (2011) calls qualitative policy research – and situates in the hermeneutic tradition – has the most elements in common with my research. This is also the form of research most frequently used in governance studies, as they are often based on qualitative case studies, at least in European research (Rhodes 2012, 34).

In qualitative policy research, analysis is strongly based on findings from the empirical data. However, there is a constant interaction between existing theory and the empirical findings (Wagenaar 2011, 261–266). The primary methods of data collection are semi-structured qualitative interviews and analysis of written documents (Wagenaar 2011, 79–80), with other writers suggesting use of observation and ethnographic participation (Yanow 2000). Qualitative policy research is generally based on case studies on particular policy initiatives (Wagenaar 2011, 72). A case study means a thorough and comprehensive investigation of the research object, which in some of the methodological literature is described as a “thick description” (Geertz 1973) of a certain phenomenon (Laine et al. 2007, 10). According to Laine et al. (ibid.), case studies are often characterized by the following elements: (1) holism or comprehensive analysis of an actually existing phenomenon, (2) interest in a social process or several processes, (3) combination of several forms of data and methods, (4) use of earlier research on the field and (5) difficulties in drawing clear boundaries between the case and the context.

In case studies, the case rather than a special methodology or form of data is at the centre of the analysis and data about it is gathered in various ways. However, a case study should always be a *case of something*, which means that it should represent a broader phenomenon than the actual case under review. With case studies, there are several logics for selection which allow for different levels of generalisation on the case in question (see Laine et al. 2007,

cf. Flyvbjerg 2001). From the perspective of this study, three forms of case selection are the most important. First, a *typical case* is a situation, issue or process which can be seen as average or general. Second, a *revealing case* focuses on a phenomenon which is fairly well known but has not been studied. Finally, a *future-oriented case* concentrates on a case representative of a future phenomenon, such as a policy reform implemented for the first time in a pilot area. (Laine et al. 2007, 32–34.)

My case, the Citizen Channel project and the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area to which the project belonged, had elements of all three types. Citizen Channel was a relatively typical case of a democratic innovation, as it was a project where the aim was to develop participation. Similar examples of participatory projects are to be found in EU-funded urban projects conducted in Finland (Kuokkanen forthcoming a) or in French urban policy (Nonjon 2005, 2012). At the same time, the Citizen Channel project and the Urban Programme represented a case of programme- and project-based multi-actor urban and metropolitan governance (see Chapter 2.5). At the same time, the case could also be seen as being revealing, as the role that projects play especially in the development of participation and, to some extent, as a form of governance are under-studied areas in the existing research. Finally, the case selection had some elements of a future-oriented case, as it concentrated on a development project and programme which have paved way for metropolitan reforms in the Helsinki Region in the future.

In the case study approach and a large part of the existing governance research and interpretive policy analysis, researchers prefer a multi-data approach as a way to overcome the limitations of the various individual approaches (Hansen & Sørensen 2005, Laine et al. 2007, see also Mykkänen 2001, 110–111). In studies based on interviews, other forms of data can help to overcome the problems with representativeness of interviewees or the fact that interviewees may say one thing and act otherwise. Policy documents are often very formal and as they are the outcome of compromise and negotiation, they say little about existing conflicts. (Hansen & Sørensen 2005.) The empirical data of this study consists primarily of semi-structured interviews. Other forms of data gathering and analysis included scrutiny of relevant policy documents, following the topic via newspapers, and participation in seminars organised by the Citizen Channel project and Helka.

The interviews formed the central part of the empirical data. Between May 2008 and January 2009, I conducted 29 semi-structured interviews with the actors in the governance networks of the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project. Two further actors preferred to answer by e-mail, and another interviewee participated both in the oral interview and sent written answers. However, in the analysis it became clear that the oral interviews provided much deeper and richer data than the e-mailed answers, and the interview situation allowed the emergence of topics not originally included in the interview guide.

Qualitative policy research is usually based on the idea of backward mapping (Wagenaar 2011, 79). This approach is also the one most commonly used in governance studies, even though they incorporate a broader range of alternative research strategies (see e.g. Bogason & Zølner 2007). In practice, backward mapping means the tracing of a specific policy process and charting the relevant actors. As Dvora Yanow (2000, 38) puts it in an early textbook of interpretive policy analysis, the analyst must make sense of *specific local knowledge* around a *certain policy issue*. According to Sørensen and Torfing (2007a, 6–7), emphasis on policy output and the backward mapping of the central policy actors will often lead to the disentangling of multi-level governance networks. According to the authors, interaction with the actors can sharpen research questions, reveal hidden processes behind the networks and give a pragmatic basis for the analytical conclusions of the research.

According to Yanow (2000, 38), the first task of the researcher is to identify groups of people who might share understandings of specific policy ideas, which Yanow calls “interpretive communities”. In identifying the key actors, an important technique is snowball sampling, which consists of asking “With whom else should I speak” in the interviews (Yanow 2000, 38, Hansen & Sørensen 2005). In sampling my interviewees, I used both information available on the Internet and snowball sampling. The contact information for the members of the Urban Programme management group and the Citizen Channel project administration was gathered from the Internet site of the Urban Programme, although in these interviews I also asked who else I should speak to. Participants in the Citizen Channel project were gathered through snowball sampling, with their contact information supplied by the project administration. I was aware that there could be a risk of selection bias if the project administration were to emphasise the role of those actors that would be well disposed towards their project. However, in practice, among the interviewees were a number of critical voices, especially among the librarians who participated in the Citizen Channel project. A problem with the selection of interviewees among the participants in that project was nevertheless the relatively small number of people (three inhabitant association activists and three librarians) that could be reached and were willing to be interviewed.

The second task of the researcher is, in the words of Yanow (2000, 38), to identify the relevant “policy artefacts” through which understandings of the policy issue are expressed. Here, similarities and differences might arise in how different groups talk and act with respect to the issue. According to Wagenaar (2011, 296), the hermeneutic forms of interpretive policy analysis such as qualitative policy research are good at “amplifying the voice of the policy targets” or drawing out the meaning that a policy problem has for different audiences.

In my research, I analysed how three groups of actors presented the Citizen Channel project and the Urban Programme and what their views were on urban and metropolitan governance, citizen participation and programme- and project-based development. The actor groups consisted of the

management group of the Urban Programme; those in the project administration; and those participating in the Citizen Channel project (see Table 1). Even though employing an approach detailing the backgrounds of the actors in these governance networks would have been more informative, I was not able to do so because I had promised to respect the anonymity of the interviewees. For this reason, only broader actor categories are presented both in this table and the interview extracts in the analysis.

Table 1. *The actors interviewed*

Interviewed group	Members	Number of members (n)	Interviewed persons (n)*	Coded as
Urban Programme management group	Upper-level municipal officials from the four municipalities, Ministry of the Interior, Uusimaa Regional Council, Helsinki Metropolitan Area Council YTV, Culminatum, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities	15	9	Urban Programme management group, municipality/ other actor
Citizen Channel project managers	Three successive project managers employed by Helka	3	3	Citizen Channel project administration, municipality/ NGO or other association
Citizen Channel management group	Upper-/ medium-level municipal officials from the four municipalities, Helsinki Neighbourhoods Association Helka, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities	6 (7)	4	
Citizen Channel steering group	Street-level municipal officials from the four municipalities, NGOs, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities	20	12	
Citizen Channel project participants	Neighbourhood association activists, librarians, residents, schoolchildren, community centres etc.	?	6 (3 neighbourhood association activists, 3 librarians)	Citizen Channel project participant, neighbourhood association activist/ librarian

* Three actors belonged to two of the groups. Altogether 31 people were interviewed.

The Urban Programme management group consisted of relatively high-level public sector officials from the cities of Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen, along with others from the Uusimaa Regional Council, the Ministry of the Interior (later, from the Ministry of Employment and the Economy), the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, the regional development company Culminatum, and the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Council YTV, which was a metropolitan network responsible for the provision of many utilities (reorganised in 2009). Of the 15 members of the management group, I interviewed nine. These included representatives from all the actors involved apart from the relatively small municipality of Kauniainen, with whom I did not manage to arrange an interview despite my efforts. In the case of Espoo, my interview request was delegated from the original management group members to another representative of the city who had also been closely involved in the Urban Programme.

Interviewees at the project level included both members of the project administration and participants in the Citizen Channel project. The project administration included three groups of actors: project managers employed for the project by Helka; the management group; and the steering group. During the period of slightly over two years that it existed, the Citizen Channel project had three successive project workers and I interviewed all of them. The management group of the Citizen Channel project was a small group which consisted of relatively high-level officials from the cities of Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa, the chairperson of Helka (the umbrella organisation of neighbourhood associations in Helsinki, which was in charge of the realisation of the project) and a representative from the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. The purpose of this group was to function as a link between the project and the Urban Programme and to make decisions on funding and other important issues and alignments. Of these six persons (in actual fact seven, as the representative of Vantaa changed during the course of the project) I interviewed four.

The steering group of the project consisted of various stakeholders working with issues of participation, mainly municipal officials, NGOs and researchers. The municipal officials in the steering group were closer to the grassroots level than those in the management group, since for the most part they were planners or researchers or worked in local social services. The associations in the steering group represented umbrella organisations of neighbourhood associations in Helsinki and Espoo and detached housing associations in Espoo and Vantaa, the Helsinki community centre association and the Finnish Society for Futures Studies. In addition, the group included some researchers from universities and research institutes, representatives from the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and the project manager of the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Of these 20 persons, I interviewed 12 (two via e-mail).

Finally, I interviewed three activists from different neighbourhood associations and three grass-roots level officials – in this case, librarians – who

came from different neighbourhoods and had participated in the concrete realisation of the project in the pilot areas. Neighbourhood association activists who had participated in the project proved particularly difficult to reach and their numbers remained relatively small. However, all in all, I tried to cover the governance networks at the different levels of the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project as well as possible.

The interviews were examples of semi-structured interviews, which are most commonly used in qualitative policy analysis and governance studies (Wagenaar 2011, Granberg 2004, 33). This means that even though the interviewer proceeds through a set of questions, the answers are open. In my interviews, I used a very loosely structured form of interview, which in the Finnish research is called a thematic interview (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2007). This means that certain themes are covered in the interviews, but the order of the questions or their exact wording is not important. In interview situations, I went through a list of themes or loosely defined questions, which can be called an interview guide and is relatively well described in the following extract:

An interview guide is a list of questions or issues that are to be explored in the course of an interview. (...) The interviewer remains free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style – but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined.

(Patton 1980, 200, cited in Granberg 2004, 33.)

The interview guides concerned the backgrounds of the actors and their roles in the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area or in the Citizen Channel project; their experiences from the programme and/or the project; and their views on urban and metropolitan policies, citizen participation and programme- and project-based development. The interview guides differed slightly depending on which group of actors I was interviewing (see Appendix 1–4).

In the interviews, the theoretical framework of the study was operationalised in the following way (see also Appendix 1–4): In the interviews with the Urban Programme management group, the theme of governance was related to questions concerning preparation and decision-making and the actors involved. The questions about the central actors and stakeholders addressed the issue of networks and external actors, presented as a core phenomenon in earlier governance studies. Special attention was paid to the issue of consensus and conflict in decision-making, as the existing literature on governance claims that collaborative forms of governance are based on a consensual form of action. The interviews with the Citizen Channel project administration included similar questions, but with greater emphasis on the relationship between the project and the Urban Programme on the one hand and that between the project and the participants on the other. An especially important question was the role of Helka as an NGO and external stakeholder

in this process – seen both from the perspective of the Urban Programme management group and the Citizen Channel project administration. The participants in the project – both the neighbourhood association activists and the librarians – were asked their impressions about the preparatory work (in which they in practice were not involved) and decision-making in the project and the role of Helka in this process.

The issue of metagovernance was operationalised in the interviews in two ways. The first addressed the relationship between the Urban Programme, the Citizen Channel project and the institutions of representative municipal democracy. However, as the principle of programme and project steering presupposes, another form of metagovernance takes place through strategic and programme steering. This was analysed in several ways: through questions about the way in which the actors in the Citizen Channel project – both in the project administration and among the participants of the project – knew about the Urban Programme and the extent that the project administration and the Urban Programme had contacts with each other (and, for instance, overlapping actors). With the participants in the Citizen Channel project, the questions concerned not only their knowledge about the Urban Programme, but also the central aims of Citizen Channel. Another set of questions concerned the actual priorities of the Urban Programme, the Citizen Channel project administration and the participants in the project and the degree to which they cohered with each other. Special attention was paid to the issue of international competitiveness since this was presented as a guiding vision for the whole Urban Programme in the official programming documents.

In the interviews, the development of participation was theoretically anchored in the literature about the “participatory turn” of public administration, democratic innovations and existing research about local participation. At the same time, the development of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region was related to the more general urban and metropolitan governance discussion. In the interview guide, there were two broad themes concerning the views of the interviewee on the development of urban/metropolitan policy for the region, and on the development of participation. These themes were specified with more detailed questions. With metropolitan governance, these questions elicited views on the use of programmes and projects in metropolitan governance in relation to more established institutions and practices, and on what issues should be addressed at the metropolitan level. With participation, the questions concerned the most important level of participation in the municipal context, the need for metropolitan forms of participation, issues where direct participation was especially suitable, and the use of programmes and projects as tools for participation. In this study, these two issues overlapped, since the Citizen Channel project dealt with the development of specifically metropolitan forms of participation.

The issue of projectification did not constitute a specific part of the interview guide, as it was more of a cross-cutting theme that manifested itself in the way in which the interviewees talked about programmes and projects, the development of participation and metropolitan governance. As was noted above, these two last themes included direct questions about the use of programmes and projects. However, it must also be noted that the issue of projectification established itself during the analysis – partly because of the themes emanating from the data, partly because of the involvement of this study in a broader research project on the projectification of public administration – as the most central theme of this study in relation to more general governance research.

The interviews were sometimes slightly tailored in individual interviews so that I asked further questions on the special expertise of the interviewee in order to gather as much information as possible. This is a common strategy in expert interviews and in studying multi-actor governance networks, as the interviewees come from different fields and have special knowledge about different things (Alastalo & Åkerman 2010, 378). Some actors had, for instance, been involved in the preparation of the Finnish national urban policy, while others had considerable knowledge about the preparatory phase of the Citizen Channel project or earlier Finnish participatory initiatives. Often these situations arose spontaneously, as these issues cropped up in the course of the interview situation (cf. Alastalo & Åkerman 2010, 379–380).

The interviews with municipal officials and the project administration were typical of the kind of expert interview often used in social sciences and, more specifically in governance studies (see e.g. Bogner et al. 2009, Alastalo & Åkerman 2010, Hansen & Sørensen 2005). By this is meant the interviewing of a group of people with special knowledge on a specific issue or process (Alastalo & Åkerman 2010, 373), in keeping with the picture presented earlier as the basic starting point of interpretive policy analysis. In the case of expert interviews, the interviews are delimited in advance to a certain group, so they do not have to be a representative sample of the whole population (Hansen & Sørensen 2005, Alastalo & Åkerman 2010, 374). In their study, Alastalo and Åkerman (2010, 372) see expert interviews as presenting both knowledge of a specific issue or process and at the same time the interviewee's own interpretations of and perspectives on it.

The category of experts often overlaps with that of elite, and in my experience, the interviews with upper-level public officials had particular similarities in what in the literature have been called elite interviews. In such interview situations, there is a status difference between the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewees are often highly educated, are used to talking in public and deploy a certain level of abstraction in their speech. They may be pursuing a personal agenda in their speech or else following the official line of their organisation to the letter – which was, in my interviews, the case with some upper-level municipal officials. Sometimes, the interpretations of the

interviewees may differ from those of the researcher and lead to a disagreement on the “correct” interpretations. (Mykkänen 2001.)

I saw a clear distinction between interview data as “facts” and as “cultural interpretations” (see Alasuutari 2011) ill-suited for my study, as the interviews entailed elements of both approaches, as is often the case in expert interviews (Alastalo & Åkerman 2010, 372). In my study, the interviewees consisted of people who were experts in their fields or actual policy-makers, often both. Many of the interviewees had backgrounds as researchers and from that perspective, saw me as a colleague. They often wanted to speak about the topic in scientific and theoretical terms, starting the interpretive process in the interview situation, as it were (cf. Mykkänen 2001, 123). As was noted above, qualitative and interpretive studies require a certain respect for the self-interpretations of the research objects, but at the same time, emphasise the researcher’s having a certain degree of independence in their interpretations. Despite the challenges that the abstract and scientific framework used by some of the interviewees posed to the analysis, the self-interpretations of the interviewees could be seen as a positive thing, as the existence of a common (i.e. “researcher”) framework with the interviewees helped to create a dialogic and relaxed atmosphere in the interview situations. The interviews were conducted either at the workplace of the interviewees or in my working room (or, exceptionally, at a café) and they were recorded and transcribed. In writing the research report, I translated the quotations into English. Even though all the interviewees were assigned their own numerical codes, I decided not to use them in the final report because in some cases, the combination of several citations would have made it possible to identify the interviewee.

The policy documents used in this study were downloaded from the Internet site of the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (which was closed during the latter phases of the study, even if many of the policy documents are still archived on a number Internet pages). The central policy documents included the programming documents for the Urban Programmes for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area 2002–2004, 2005–2007 and, to some extent, 2008–2010; descriptions of individual projects as presented in policy documents or on the Internet; the publications of the Citizen Channel project and its Internet site; and mid-term policy evaluations of the 2002–2004 and 2005–2007 programmes (Uusikylä & Valovirta 2003, Uusikylä et al. 2007), which included evaluations of individual projects. The non-published data included the internal reports of the Citizen Channel project and lists of the networks of actors at local level, which I obtained from the project manager. In addition, I received material from the Finland 2017 (Suomi 2017) project, which can be seen as a predecessor of the Citizen Channel project.

Besides this material, the *Kaupunginosien Kehittämisverkosto* (KaKe) project of the Urban Programme 2002–2004 resulted in a book (Kanninen 2005) in which Citizen Channel was presented, and the history of Helka was described in another publication (Bäcklund 2004). More recently, preparatory

work on metropolitan reforms in the Helsinki Region resulted in a number of policy documents, research reports and pamphlets (Taipale 2011, Tolkki et al. 2011, Metropolialueen esiselvitys 2013, Rakennepoliittinen ohjelma talouden kasvuedellytysten vahvistamiseksi ja julkisen talouden kestävyysvajeen umpeen kuromiseksi 2013, Valtiovarainministeriö 2014). During my research, I kept track of the development of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region from the region's Internet site (Helsingiseutu.fi) and via the newspaper Helsingin Sanomat.

In the analysis, policy documents were a useful source in assembling an overall picture of the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project, their objectives before the beginning of the programming period, the central actors, and the results that were reported during and after the programming period. They helped to create a picture of the strategic guidelines of the Urban Programme, which in theory should act as a framework for the individual projects according to the principles of programme management (see Chapter 2.4). The Citizen Channel project presented an outline of its objectives before the actual project had started, which could be set against the actual activities organised for the project and the other projects in the Urban Programme. After the programming period had started, the mid-term policy evaluations of the Urban Programmes 2002–2004 and 2005–2007 presented a relatively analytical “outsider” perspective on the programme and the individual projects. Citizen Channel's results were published in a number of brochures and reports. I analysed the policy documents at the beginning of my research before conducting interviews, and returned to them a number of times during the research process.

In 2006–2007, I participated in two open seminars organized by the Citizen Channel project. These were the democracy seminar *Kansalaisvaikuttaminen. NYT* (“Citizen influence. NOW”) organized by the project and the Helsinki Neighbourhoods Association Helka on 20th September, 2006, and a seminar concerning the results of the Citizen Channel project organized by the project and the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area on 11th November, 2007. In 2011, I participated in a seminar organised by the “Creating attractive developed and dynamic societies together with inhabitants” (CADDIES) project that Helka conducted after Citizen Channel. Even though participation in the seminars could be understood as a form of ethnographic observation, I was not actively gathering data about the interaction between the different actors, for instance. Especially in the two first seminars, my purpose was to glean background information on the subject before starting the actual interviews.

In interpretative analysis, there are two forms of interpretations: the self-interpretations of the interviewees (or other kinds of research objects), and the interpretations of the researcher. According to Glynos and Howarth (2007, 13), two hermeneutical premises are commonly approved across all the interpretive schools of thought. The first is that the researcher has to take seriously the self-interpretations of the actors engaged in the practice under

study. The second is that the researcher cannot solely rely on the self-interpretations of the actors and has to have the capacity to see beyond them (ibid.). In other words, the development of “proto-interpretations” (Taylor 1985, 27, cited in Glynos & Howarth 2007, 56) must be elaborated into scientific analysis.

According to Wagenaar (2011), the aim of data analysis in interpretive or case study research has the aim of moving from empirical material to generalisations. In qualitative policy research, the analysis of the data has much in common with that in grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss 1967, Charmaz 2014), where the logic of explanation is drawn from the empirical data through coding and memo writing. However, many qualitative policy studies are not strictly based on grounded theory as it is portrayed in the classic book by Glaser and Strauss (1967) or in later textbooks, which are based on the idea that understanding is built up from the data without presuppositions. In practice, analysis is based on a more complex dialogue between earlier theory and the empirical data. Although theory, design and data can be analytically separated, they are in practice closely intertwined with each other. (Wagenaar 2011.) The researcher, even if he or she does not have a strict hypothesis, has a “theoretically coloured” idea at the beginning of the research process, even though the empirical data gets more tied to theory as the analysis goes further (Granberg 2004, 26–27). Or, as Wagenaar (2011, 244) puts it, the analysis “always consists of entering into a dialogue between the preconceptions we bring to the study and the empirical data we have collected”. First, the researcher has certain general research questions, and concrete interview themes and questions. More generally, he or she has prior understanding of a specific field of study, theories and ways of conducting research (ibid., 261). The research here is based on this logic. Instead of pure grounded theory, the research approach is based on a “theoretically coloured” idea from the beginning, which means that it draws on the existing literature about governance, projectification and participation – and contributes to it in turn.

Wagenaar (2011, 243; cf. Charmaz 2014) states that research should be organised so that it creates conditions for novelty and surprise. Glynos and Howarth (2007, 24) compare this to the idea of discovery in natural sciences, which in qualitative analysis comes from the data through retroduction and backward-mapping. Similarly, according to Yanow (2000, 38), after a general sense making, the researcher should concentrate on puzzles that emerge from the data. Such puzzles may be events, acts or interactions which contradict what the researcher expected, which he or she cannot make sense of with his or her existing knowledge, or which contradict one another. Or, as Wagenaar puts it:

When we are involved in grounded analysis we will scan an interview transcript and ask ourselves if the data support, contradict, or develop what we already know. Even if the data corroborate what we already know, they often provide an unanticipated specification of the theory.

Even when it doesn't change theory, it becomes enriched. But, more often, the data surprise us because they do not fit in our a priori theory. They contradict it, or the theory simply doesn't explain what the respondent says.

Wagenaar 2011. 265

In my research, the first puzzle emerged when I was reading the policy documents before I had started my interviews, and it actually became one of my research questions that I went on to ask in the interviews. This was the relationship between competitiveness – central to the Urban Programme – and the issue of participation, which was the main aim of the Citizen Channel project. The second puzzle was something that I heard in a seminar organised by the Citizen Channel project, also before I had started my interviews. There, I heard for the first time that in Citizen Channel, the idea of modelling participation was not in focus in the actual working of the project, but that when the project was realised, it focused on concrete local issues. Once again, I was able to develop this issue further in the interview situations.

In the interviews, I had other “puzzling” situations. With the neighbourhood association activists, I was puzzled by the way in which they approached the topic, as they were not concentrating on the Citizen Channel project but on more general issues in their neighbourhoods. However, during the analysis I realised that they were approaching the project through the issues of their neighbourhoods partly because of their own interests, partly because of the way in which the project administration had presented the project to them. In the analysis of the high-level municipal officials, I was puzzled by the fact that many of them were relatively cautious in the interviews and sometimes corrected me if I used for instance the concept of “urban policy”. During the course of the analysis, I understood that the issue of urban and metropolitan policy was a highly politicised topic and that the high-level municipal officials understood their role as representing the official view of their municipality. This same phenomenon was not present in the interviews with the street-level municipal officials.

I analysed the interview material with the help of the qualitative analysis programme atlas.ti. I coded the material by different themes that I identified. As the analysis developed, I could invent more conceptual codes instead of purely descriptive ones, make further connections between the different codes or divide one code into several subcategories. Altogether, I used approximately 250 codes. However, many codes were gathered under relatively broad umbrellas like “Helka”, “Citizen Channel”, “Urban Programme”, “development of participation”, “(aim of) participation”, “change in participation”, “problems of participation”, “projects”, “administrative organs”, “metropolitan governance” or “(metropolitan) issues”, leading to approximately 40 codes. For instance the umbrella code “Helka” included eight codes: “Helka and reliability/credibility”, “Helka and proactivity”, “Helka as an expert in participation and projects”, “Helka as an intermediary

organisation”, “Helka’s history”, “Helka’s members” and “Helka’s chairperson”. Similarly, the umbrella code of “Urban Programme” included 29 codes under it, for example “Urban Programme: added value”, Urban Programme: state/municipality relation” or “Urban Programme: symbolic importance”.

Simultaneously with the coding process, I was writing short memos on paper in which I made interpretations of the data. During the research process, the analytical focus of my research became more targeted. The theories of participatory and deliberative democracy, crucial at the beginning, did not always fit with the idea of developing and modelling participation. The literature on urban and metropolitan governance, although relevant, also passed more into the background during the research process, partly because the findings from our recent research on mainly regional development projects have led to relatively similar results (Godenhjelm et al. 2012, Sjöblom et al. forthcoming). At the same time, the themes of projectification and democratic innovation (which as a concept is nevertheless quite seldom used in the empirical part of the analysis as I have preferred to talk about the development of participation) became more pronounced during the research, as they seemed best at capturing the logic behind the Urban Programme and Citizen Channel project.

Generalisation in qualitative analysis and case studies remains a debated topic, one related in part to broader questions of ontology and epistemology. The results of this study concern a particular case from the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. However, as was already noted above, my hope is that they will say something more general about programme- and project-based metropolitan governance and the development of participation through projects. Naturally, a broader international comparison in the selection of cases could have allowed a more thorough understanding of what is typical for the Finnish (or Nordic) context in issues of urban or metropolitan governance and participatory projects. However, I have earlier conducted comparative research on urban policies in several Western European countries (Kuokkanen 2005) which has provided me with some insight as to how to situate the Finnish case in this field. The present thesis similarly draws on a large amount of international research literature and its findings are situated in relation to this literature.

The choice of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was justifiable from the perspective that it was the biggest urban area in Finland, with three (in the Finnish context) big municipalities, a complex process of metropolitan governance, a high number of residents as potential subjects in participatory projects, and a metropolitan development programme which included an explicit participatory project. On a personal level, I wanted to study my home city (about which I have, naturally, lots of tacit knowledge) after research projects concerning European urban policies (Kuokkanen 2005) and Finnish rural and regional policies (Kuokkanen 2004, Kuokkanen & Vihinen 2009).

The next chapter will begin the empirical analysis of this research. In Chapter 5 I will look at theme of governance and metagovernance in the entity formed by the Urban Programme, the Citizen Channel project administration, and the participants in the project. Chapter 6 will concentrate on the development of participation, both as a more general phenomenon in Finnish administration and in the context of metropolitan governance. Chapter 7 will deal with the issue of projectification in the development of participation. Finally, Chapter 8 consists of the conclusions of the study.

5 THE URBAN PROGRAMME AND THE CITIZEN CHANNEL PROJECT: A COMPLEX PICTURE OF MULTI-ACTOR GOVERNANCE

This study concentrates on the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area 2005–2007 and within the programme, on a participatory project named Citizen Channel. The Urban Programme 2005–2007 was a development programme which was concretely implemented through 17 projects (or 16, if two projects on the same theme following one after the other are counted as one). The general aim of the projects was to increase regional cooperation and organising capacities by creating a number of pilots and new models of action. According to the programming documents, the Urban Programme was meant to deal with issues that did not fall under the responsibility of the existing policy sectors of established cooperation forums. Citizen Channel was one of the projects of the Urban Programme 2005–2007. According to the original description of Citizen Channel, the objective of the project was to develop a model of interaction, a “citizen channel”, between the citizens and the administration of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area which would cross municipal and sectoral borders (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2005–2007: Hankerekisteri). Thematically, the project combined the issues of participation and interaction with that of transcending municipal borders (the metropolitan dimension). In practice, the project consisted of trying, testing and modelling a variety of different participatory tools. (See also Kuokkanen 2013, 2014.)

The purpose of this chapter is to gain an overview of the Urban Programme, the Citizen Channel project administration and the participants in the project by analysing the priorities, actors and forms of action associated with these groups. Theoretically, the analysis is based on the governance literature as presented in Chapter 2, especially the literature on urban/ metropolitan governance, the role of the different actors in governance networks and the issues of metagovernance and, to some extent, participation and projectification. I will first look at the programme level, second at the project administration and then at the participants in the project.

5.1 THE URBAN PROGRAMME: COMPETITIVENESS AND CONSENSUS-BUILDING

The Urban Programmes, like the more recent developments in metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region, emanated from two backgrounds. These were, firstly, strong pressure for metropolitan cooperation coming from the

state level to which the municipalities reacted, in their turn, by creating new forms of collaboration. Secondly, there were specific policy issues – such as the international competitiveness of the Helsinki Region, issues of social cohesion, governance and sustainable development (including housing and urban structure) – that needed to be addressed and which, according to the underlying political reasoning, could not be solved using existing sector- and municipality-based forms of administration (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma. Osaaminen ja osallisuus, 22). Here it must be noted that the Urban Programmes were only development programmes, where the emphasis was overwhelmingly on the development of pilots, networks and new forms of action.

Even though there had been earlier, primarily issue-based forms of collaboration between the municipalities of Helsinki Metropolitan Area, the Urban Programmes can be seen as one of the first attempts to create a dialogue about common urban and metropolitan policies for the four municipalities of the area. As was noted in Chapter 3.2, the metropolitan governance of the region had long been characterised by a competition situation, coupled with some forms of networks and collaboration (Haila & Le Galès 2005). The first programme covered the years 2002–2004, and in my study, I am concentrating on the second programme, which covered the period 2005–2007. After my fieldwork concluded, the programmatic development of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area continued with a third Urban Programme in 2008–2010 and a nationally implemented Regional Cohesion and Competitiveness Programme from 2010 until early 2012. This subchapter will first analyse the central issues in the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area 2005–2007, then its tacit results, and finally its central actors and forms of governance and metagovernance.

5.1.1 COMPETITIVENESS AS THE OFFICIAL OBJECTIVE, PARTICIPATION AS A SECONDARY ISSUE

Officially, the aim of the Urban Programme 2005–2007 was “to improve the international competitiveness of the Helsinki Region and its readiness to function as a world-class centre of business and innovation with measures which improve the opportunities for housing, learning, participation, working and entrepreneurship in the region” (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2005–2007, 5). As was noted in Chapter 2.5, the issue of competitiveness has been the central theme of European urban policies since the 1980s and in the Nordic countries since the 1990s. According to the “New Conventional Wisdom” of urban policy, competitiveness is intimately intertwined with other issues such as social cohesion, environmental questions and proactive governance (Buck et al. 2005, Kuokkanen 2005), which was also the case with the discourse in the programming documents for the Urban Programme. At the same time, it is possible to situate the Urban Programme in the broader framework of Finnish urban policy, which has been described from a

comparative perspective as “opportunity-oriented” (Holstila 2007), meaning in practice that it emphasises economic development and competitiveness over the prevention of segregation (Bradley et al. 2004).

The vision of the Urban Programme 2005–2007 was implemented through three lines of action: (1) the application of various forms of cooperation to improve wellbeing and make services more efficient, (2) improvement of the competitiveness of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and (3) development of the urban structure and housing (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2005–2007, 13). In practice, the issue of competitiveness became the most pronounced, and the programme included projects concerned with the development of services and new forms of collaboration in this field. The line of action on urban structure and housing remained very modest and included initially only the Citizen Channel project, where the aim was to develop citizen participation and interaction between citizens and the public administration, before at a later point in the programme extending to a project relating to a housing “knowledge cluster.” In the first Urban Programme, it had been determined that issues of international competitiveness, social cohesion and the deepening of metropolitan governance belonged under the scope of the Urban Programme, whereas the questions of land use, housing, transport and urban structure would be addressed through other means (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma. Osaaminen ja osallisuus, 22).

The main objective of the Urban Programme 2005–2007 and the three lines of action were taken directly from the common vision and strategy for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, which was approved by elected politicians and set the broader strategic framework for the programme. In earlier literature, urban competitiveness has been used as a key example of a theme in strategic steering which is vague and general enough for all actors to agree to as long as it does not need to be concretised (Tolkki et al. 2011, 53; cf. Gordon & Buck 2005, Pinson 2009). The issue of competitiveness was also central to the previous Urban Programme (2002–2004). However, it became more pronounced in the rhetoric of the programming documents for the second programming period, while issues such as participation and social cohesion were clearly less in evidence. In practice, this rhetorical change was not seen in the concrete projects, as all the three Urban Programmes included at least one project that was related to the theme of participation.

In the interviews, the emphasis on competitiveness was not only seen as the result of upper-level strategies, but also as a consequence of the strong role of certain actors in the management group of the Urban Programme who vigorously promoted the issue. Here, the interviewees gave special mention to the regional development company Culminatum (which has ended its operations in 2014), owned by the Uusimaa Regional Council, the cities of Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa, the universities and universities of applied science, research institutes and business community of the Helsinki region. This company had an active role in the realisation of those projects which dealt with the issue of competitiveness, it was represented in the programme’s

management group, and its central actors had close links to Finnish national urban policy. The interim evaluation of the first Urban Programme (Uusikylä & Valovirta 2003, 14) had similar findings: the projects concentrating on competitiveness were successful because they were conducted by Culminatum, received lots of attention and were situated outside the sectoral municipal administration. At the same time, the projects concentrating on issues such as education and participation were more affected by sectoral barriers within the administration and a lack of coordination, “ownership” and committed project implementation (Uusikylä & Valovirta 2003, 14).

In the interviews, besides that of Culminatum, the role of the city of Espoo in the promotion of competitiveness was mentioned, while Vantaa in particular was seen as promoting a more socially oriented urban policy. This is a logical finding because of the political backgrounds of the cities and has been noticed in earlier research on the metropolitan governance of the region (Haila & Le Galès 2005). In the interviews, some of the members of the Urban Programme management group criticised the prominent role ascribed to urban competitiveness in the programme and would have wanted to emphasise issues of social policy such as social cohesion and the prevention of segregation.

Competitiveness emerged as an overriding theme, which was no wonder, because it was and still is [high on the political agenda] and when the economic depression comes, its importance can rise even more. So it was not a surprise that it was the first priority. Directly speaking, it depended on the position of [certain persons] in this framework.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

We have gone quite strongly into this theme of competitiveness. Well I do understand it, too, but I am not so enthusiastic about it. (...) The Helsinki Metropolitan Area should strengthen this welfare and comfort and safety and it would be beneficial for all.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

It can be said that the issue of citizen participation was only a secondary theme in the programme, as the main targets lay elsewhere – in the development of competitiveness and a broader framework of municipal collaboration inside the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. However, all the programming documents for the Urban Programmes included a discourse of citizen participation. The programming document for the first Urban Programme (2002–2004) was notable for framing citizen participation in a number of ways. Participation was related to innovation and creativity through the creation of multi-actor partnerships. The document mentioned the urban way of life as a source of innovation and “creative tension” which could “to get people excited in a genuine way”. The role of immigrants was seen as a means of increasing the

attractiveness of the city. Here, parallels can be drawn with the ideas of Richard Florida (2002), who spoke of a tolerant atmosphere as one element in attracting the “creative class” and thus lead to improved regional economic performance. At the same time, citizen participation was related to social cohesion, the prevention of social exclusion, the creation of an open and safe city, and the inclusion of immigrants. It was also seen as an important aspect in a situation where metropolitan governance was intensifying. According to the programming document 2002–2004, from the perspective of residents, the most important questions in the organisation of metropolitan governance were the availability of services and democratic participation. (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma. Osaaminen ja osallisuus.)

In the discourse of the Urban Programmes 2005–2007 and 2008–2010, the issue of democracy was more closely related to the establishment of representative institutions at the metropolitan level than in the first programme, which can be related to the creation of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Advisory Board in 2004 and a simultaneous deepening of the discussion on metropolitan governance. At the same time, the rhetoric of participation diminished in the programming documents. The different ways in which participation was seen in the first Urban Programme – partnerships with the third sector, the creativeness of residents, issues of social cohesion, the integration of immigrants – were to some extent present in the later programmes, especially in the Urban Programme 2005–2007. The Urban Programme 2008–2010 emphasised integration of immigrants and the role of residents in developing services. It also underlined the role of “end-users” in the preparatory work for and evaluation of the programme (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2008–2010, 5).

All three Urban Programmes for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area programmes included projects that at least partially dealt with the issues of partnerships, participation and democracy, and the shifts in the rhetorical framework of the programming documents did not affect them. The programme 2002–2004 included a project which created a partnership-based development network for neighbourhoods (*Kaupunginosien Kehittämisverkosto, KaKe*). The objective was to create a model of action which would recognise themes and innovations linked to local development, publicise them, and create connections between municipal officials, researchers, local developers and resident activists. The main forms of action were seminars, thematic meetings and the dissemination of information through networks and on the Internet. (Uusikylä & Valovirta 2003.) In the programme 2005–2007, the Citizen Channel project, which is analysed in this study, aimed to develop a model of interaction, a “citizen channel”, between the citizens and administration of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2005–2007: Hankerekisteri) Lastly, the Urban Programme 2008–2010 included a project which gathered and developed indicators for assessing democracy in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (Ahokas 2009). Besides these projects, the issue of participation was

indirectly present in some of the other projects, which concerned development of “participating parenthood”, a local security model, the integration of immigrants and so on.

In the interviews, the members of the Urban Programme management group were generally of the view that the issue of citizen participation should be an integral part of the Urban Programme and other urban and metropolitan development work. Despite some claims from the Citizen Channel project administration or from the participants in the project that public officials were not sufficiently interested in increasing participation and that participation was outweighed by the issue of urban competitiveness, it was not visible in how the top-level officials talked about participation. This, of course, is not a new finding, as the issue of citizen participation is in principle “like eating spinach” (Arnstein 1969, 216), generally approved by everybody (see also Åström & Granberg 2007). However, some of the municipal or state-level officials had very visionary ideas on how participatory tools should be developed (see Chapter 6.1).

The interviewees from the Urban Programme management group referred to the Citizen Channel project as representing the issue of citizen participation inside the Urban Programme 2005–2007. Even though they mainly had a positive view of the project and of the Helsinki Neighbourhoods Association Helka which implemented it (see also Chapter 7.1), the two following citations nevertheless show that the views of the members of the Urban Programme management group differed in whether they actually saw citizen participation as having been an important part of the programme.

The inclusion and development of participation was a choice made at the time that these things are going to get attention. It deserves a bit of credit, this action.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

And that way [participation] could have a big role in urban policy, but what they have done is just a bit of tinkering, if you think that this Urban Programme is a very small entity in itself, and then this is a very small aspect of it. So it's very modest in relation to the importance of the issue, the way in which this urban policy machinery is able to react to it.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

In the interviews, a common way to talk about competitiveness and participation was to use the concepts of “hard” and “soft” policy. Some members of the Urban Programme management group considered the Citizen Channel project too “soft” or vague, compared to the “hard” targets of the Urban Programme such as the issue of international competitiveness – concepts sometimes used by the project administration, too, when referring to the objectives of the Urban Programme and its relationship with citizen

participation. In earlier research, there have been similar findings concerning the presentation of gender equality projects as requiring competence, but yet as somewhat inferior and as “women’s work” (Brunila 2009).

Some other interviewees questioned whether the Urban Programme was the right place for the Citizen Channel project. From this perspective, Citizen Channel was not seen to fit the objective of the Urban Programme and the management group of the programme were not seen as the right people to steer a participatory project. I heard it stated in the interviews that the management group had not been unanimous about the inclusion of Citizen Channel in the Urban Programme. According to the interviews, there had been both favourable and opposed viewpoints, with some of the members taking a neutral position. However, it was unclear how much this was due to the individual actors involved and how much to their background organisations.

If I have to think, for instance, about competitiveness versus these participatory initiatives, these participatory initiatives seemed more like soft fluff than the competitiveness issues. Although they were great starting points and there were really important themes and even good concepts, they were not promoted with such energy [as the competitiveness issues], in my opinion.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

It can nevertheless be said that even though the main objectives of the Urban Programme lay elsewhere, the Citizen Channel project contributed to the democratic legitimacy of the Urban Programme in two ways. First, through Citizen Channel, the Urban Programme accommodated one project that dealt with the theme of citizen participation, which would have otherwise been very vague or lacking. Citizen Channel was, in fact, the only project in the programme that directly concentrated on citizen participation. Participation was nevertheless a theme that was clearly evident in the programming documents of the Urban Programme and even in the title of the first Urban Programme 2002–2004, *Osaaminen ja osallisuus* (literally “Competence and involvement”). Second, Citizen Channel was an NGO-led project in a programme that was otherwise very firmly in the hands of municipal actors. This was, again, something that was present in the original policy documents, as they emphasised the role of broad partnerships in the realisation of the programme and the interim evaluation of the previous programme had stated that the links to the third sector both in planning and in implementation should be stronger (Uusikylä & Valovirta 2003).

At the project level, some interviewees went so far as to consider Citizen Channel a “PR project”. This can be interpreted in a way that suggests they saw the main aim of the project as being to create legitimacy – both for the Urban Programme as a democratic, participatory policy programme and for Helka as a professional project partner (see Chapter 7.1). As such, it can be related to the broader critique about the symbolic role of participation in public policies

(see Chapter 2.3). Some interviewees reserved special criticism for the small level of resources allocated to the project, while others saw the realisation of the project as being nonetheless relatively successful in practice.

And we wondered if this was only a PR project. I had this thought from time to time that it was only being done so that Helka could say, “We are developing this [participation], we have a project like this.” I thought so what, we’ll develop it, even if it were the case. It is good that we had this kind of [project], it left something behind.

Project administration, NGO or other association

In conclusion, it can be said that the issue of the international competitiveness of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was the most important objective of the Urban Programme according to the policy documents. In line with this, the interviewees recognised the important role that the issue of competitiveness played in the programme when compared with other issues such as the development of citizen participation. This finding accords with the general descriptions of urban policy in Europe or more generally in Western countries where competitiveness is seen as the crucial element in the “New Conventional Wisdom” around these policies (Buck et al. 2005, see also see Chapter 2.5). More specifically, Finnish programme-based urban policy (as presented in Chapter 3.2) has been described as “opportunity-oriented” (Holstila 2007) or as concentrating less than its European counterparts on issues of social policy (Bradley et al. 2004), which have been seen as the task of the permanent municipal administration. As such, the findings presented in this subchapter may be said to support the claims of those critical scholars such as Neil Brenner (2004) on the neoliberalisation of urban policies that prioritise the issue of urban competitiveness (see also Moisio 2012).

The issue of international competitiveness was nevertheless a secondary theme when interviewees were asked about the key results of the Urban Programme. In all the interviews with the Urban Programme management group and those actors at project level who were acquainted with the Urban Programme, the most important results were seen as lying elsewhere. Here, the interviewees mentioned the more tacit and less tangible results of the programme – the development of consensus and collaboration among the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. This issue will be addressed in the next subchapter.

5.1.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSENSUS AND COLLABORATION

According to the programming documents, the Urban Programme dealt with issues that did not fall under the responsibility of other existing policy sectors or established cooperation forums (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2005–2007, 13). This can be related to the thesis that new forms of governance are likely to emerge in the context of an “institutional void” with no generally

accepted rules and norms according to which politics are to be conducted and policy measures are to be agreed upon (Hajer 2003b). The main benefit of the Urban Programme was that it created new forms of collaboration between the four municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. According to the interviews, the Urban Programme marked a shift in the interaction between them. Traditionally, they had been in competition with each other – with some limited forms of cooperation – and the Urban Programme was one of the first attempts to create a dialogue and common framework for the whole area. Throughout the interviews with the Urban Programme management group and, to some extent, the Citizen Channel project administration (in those cases when the interviewee had been following the Urban Programme), it became clear that this was the biggest achievement of the Urban Programme, regardless of its official objectives, such as the promotion of competitiveness.

I think that the biggest objective has been that the actors find each other. (...) Put simply, just to establish a dialogue and have the municipalities talk more or less without hidden agendas.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

The benefits from the Urban Programme were often a lot more than the tangible results. Its consequence was rather that the bureaucracies talked with one another; people collided and got to know each other, which was then evident later when the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Advisory Board was established. (...) I could be naughty and say that the programme probably achieved different objectives than those that were set out.

Project administration, NGO or other association

According to Pinson (2009, 313–314), projects (broadly understood as including programmes) are an explicit instrument for creating coalitions and effecting collective action (see also Jensen et al. 2007 and Chapter 2.4). Many of the positive impacts of projects relate to their lateral effects: the involvement of different actors, the creation of networks and trust between actors, and the construction of collective identities (Pinson 2009, 203). According to Pinson, it can even be stated that these effects, the *process* of project, are more important than their concrete results. Similarly, Hajer (2003b, 175–176) states that when governance arrangements are created in an institutional void, “actors do not only deliberate to get to favourable solutions for particular problems but *while deliberating* [emphasis in original] they also negotiate new institutional rules, develop new norms of appropriate behaviour and devise new conceptions of legitimate political intervention”. According to Hajer (ibid., 184), in such circumstances, trust cannot be assumed, and policy-making thus is not only about finding solutions to policy issues, but “as much about *finding formats that generate trust* [emphasis in original] among mutually interdependent actors”.

In the interviews, the members of the management group emphasised the symbolic nature of the programme in creating networks between the four cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. In earlier project literature (Jensen et al. 2007, see also Chapter 2.4) the symbolic nature of public sector programmes and projects has been emphasised as a way to show that the public sector is actually taking action in a certain policy field. However, it can be also related to the other tacit results of projects, such as networking and the creation of collaboration and consensus. The collaborative nature of the Urban Programme was seen in the interviews as particularly important as a symbol, since according to some interviews, it paved the way for metropolitan collaboration across the region. In this connection, the facts that the municipalities themselves had a robust role in this development work and that that work was not directly dictated by the state were seen as crucial.

And it was really important. The results – the projects were modest, the volumes were small and when compared for instance to the budgets of the cities they were ridiculously small. But it was still symbolically very important, because this has been for the duration a collaboration between cities where the state has paid half. This is like a partnership with the state administration and between the cities.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

In the interviews, the Urban Programme was also seen as a tool for developing and trying new ways of action. This is a very general finding in the earlier literature on public sector projects, which are often used as tools to try different things in the relatively inflexible and specialised public administration (see Chapter 2.4, Jensen et al. 2007, 2013). The interviewees emphasised the need for experimentation, trials and risk-taking in public administration. They saw such forms of action as being impossible in the regular municipal administration not only because of sectoral borders and the lack of time and resources in the everyday work, but also because of the general administrative culture. Some of them saw the Urban Programme as an opportunity to find solutions to new societal challenges and issues for which existing institutions had no answer (cf. Jensen et al. 2007, Sjöblom 2006a). In this context, some of the interviewees referred to new challenges facing Finnish society such as the integration of immigrants or participation in the field of metropolitan governance, issues which have no clear place in the existing sectoral administration. More generally, the programme was seen as a way to deal with emerging issues and risks (cf. Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Sjöblom et al. 2012).

Related to the previous point, the Urban Programme was seen as an important way of overcoming the borders of what in the Finnish context is a strongly sectorised and specialised administration (see Chapter 3). This is a common enough statement in the governance and project literatures, in which new forms of governance are seen as a way to overcome such borders (see

Chapters 2.2 and 2.4, Sørensen & Torfing 2007a, Jensen et al. 2007, 2013). A cross-sectoral approach is also one of the central elements in urban policy, where the city or the metropolitan level rather than a specific policy sector is the basic unit of action (Andersen & van Kempen 2001, van den Berg et al. 2007a, Kuokkanen 2005). In research, urban social problems such as residential segregation and social exclusion are seen as needing a cross-sectoral approach, as they transcend the traditional borders of the public administration (see e.g. Jensen et al. 2013, Andersen & van Kempen 2001). The importance of experimentation and a cross-sectoral approach are illustrated well in the two following interview extracts.

There are different views on things among the cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, but wisely this programme did have in that sense a really good starting point in that its purpose was to look for added value (...) in the development of things that wouldn't be done otherwise. Through this programme it is possible to test things and take some risks and try to get extra resources.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

The sectoral administrations are quite strong, so in my opinion these Urban Programmes (...), and these projects in the Urban Programme (...), where there is an attempt to transcend sectoral boundaries, that's an extremely important thing. But the reality is that the decision-making and budgets, everything, happens through lines and sectors. Everything that develops horizontality and cross-cutting cooperation is important.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

As was noted, the interviewees from the Urban Programme management group emphasised the collaboration and the relatively consensual form of action in the management group. However, some interviewees had reservations and told of attempts to bargain or dominate decision-making. The three big municipalities were the strongest actors in the management group and some representatives from other background organisations felt sometimes that they were somewhat removed from decision-making. These interviewees supposed that besides the meetings of the broader management group, unofficial contacts took place among the municipalities and many things were in fact agreed through these. At the same time, according to the interviews, there were sometimes tensions among the municipalities which nevertheless did not lead to open conflicts. Another source of tension existed between the state and the municipalities, especially around the issue of whether the Urban Programme work should be extended to the other municipalities of the Helsinki Region. According to the interviews, a working culture based on deliberation was more productive than one based on advocating the interests of individual municipalities. However, according to

the following quotation, there was sometimes a tension between these two logics for the municipalities represented in the management group.

This has all the time been cooperation practice for the cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. They have had to dig themselves out of their foxholes and take a look at the bigger picture. But there is all the time this tension that means they easily sit there like “I am the custodian of the interests of our city in this work”. With that attitude, they aren’t very innovative.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

In general, it can be noted that the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area marked a shift towards a more deliberative working culture among municipalities that earlier had coexisted in a conflict situation. According to the interviews, this was the most important result of the programme regardless of its official policy objectives. The issue of international competitiveness, although important as a discursive framework in the Urban Programme and in evidence in many of the projects funded by the programme, was nevertheless only secondary in a programme where the main aim was to create a culture of collaboration. These findings correspond with the earlier literature on the role of projects and governance networks as arenas for creating trust, especially in the case of an “institutional void” (Hajer 2003b, see also Pinson 2009, 313–314). In this case, the metropolitan governance context was just such an area with relatively few existing institutions and a high level of distrust before the era of the Urban Programmes.

If these two subchapters have concentrated on the issues addressed and results achieved by the Urban Programme, in the next subchapter we will look at the actors and the forms of metagovernance involved. Here, there will be special emphasis on the relationship of the Urban Programme to representative municipal democracy, while the issue of metagovernance as strategic steering will be more thoroughly probed in the conclusion of this chapter after an analysis of the Urban Programme and Citizen Channel as a whole.

5.1.3 STRONG MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS, THE SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE OF METAGOVERNANCE

The first Urban Programme implemented in 2002–2004 was launched on the initiative of the mayors of the cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area together with representatives of the existing inter-municipal collaboration structures (Helsinki Metropolitan Area Council YTV, a former network of the four municipalities of the region which was responsible for utilities such as waste disposal, transport and air protection, along with the Uusimaa Regional Council). Even though the Urban Programme was partly a reaction to the

growing pressure from state level to increase metropolitan cooperation, it can be seen as a logical sequel to the earlier networking by the mayors of the area (Haila & Le Galès 2005, Giersig 2008), reflecting a general growth in importance of both mayors and metropolitan networks in urban governance noted in the international literature (Le Galès 2002, Barber 2013, Katz & Bradley 2013). The implementation of the programme was steered by a management group appointed by the mayors, consisting of representatives from the four cities, Uusimaa Regional Council, the Ministry of the Interior (later from the Ministry of Employment and the Economy), the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Council YTV and the semi-public regional development company Culminatum. The programme was funded by the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and by the state through regional development funds. (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2005–2007.)

According to the interviews, even though the management group consisted of a variety of actors, the municipalities had the strongest role. Here, the interviewees mentioned the three big municipalities of the region – especially Helsinki, but also Espoo and, to a lesser extent, Vantaa. Even though the state was involved in the programme, it was in the interviews seen mainly as a source of funding, as it was paying 50 percent of the cost of the programme (however, as will be shown later in this subchapter, this relationship was not entirely without tension). Some of the more peripheral actors in the management group considered themselves removed from decision-making by the core actors.

In practice, non-elected municipal officials were the central actors in the programme. According to the earlier literature, changes in urban governance give upper-level municipal officials large scope for manoeuvre in the design and delivery of public policy and services, while the role of politicians is to concentrate on strategic steering and metagovernance (Skelcher et al. 2013; see also Le Galès 2002, Pinson 2009). In the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, Haila and Le Galès (2005) have emphasised the role of “dynamic metropolitan networks” consisting of high-level non-elected officials, which act in parallel with robust municipal governments and more technocratic forms of issue-based intermunicipal cooperation. This was also evident in the Urban Programme. Elected officials were not directly involved in the programme, as it was seen as a “small-scale” action in relation to the size of the cities, not important enough to appear on the agenda of the municipal councils.

This probably does not register in the everyday life of municipal councillors. In smaller places, if I think of the Regional Centre Programme and these Centre of Expertise Programmes, they are such important tools that they are usually decided on at the council level, but in big cities like this, such small – in a way, small – programmes and projects don't reach the council level.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

The Urban Programme was not characterised by strategies for large-scale public involvement. However, the idea of stakeholder involvement was present, both in the preparation and in the implementation of the programme. The first Urban Programme in particular went through a preparatory phase of consultation with various stakeholders, such as different levels of public administration, universities, NGOs, companies and chambers of commerce. This practice, of course, is typical not only of programme steering, but has its roots in the Nordic tradition of corporatism and consultation.

The implementation of the programme – in practice, the various projects included in it – in principle served to broaden the sphere of actors participating in its governance networks. Among the criteria for the selection of projects were networking, collaboration and partnerships with the municipal administration, state, companies, universities, research institutes and associations (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2005–2007, 8). In practice, however, most of the projects were conducted by organisations belonging to the sectoral municipal administration or by the regional development company Culminatum, which had an especially strong position in the competitiveness-oriented projects.

There was only one NGO conducting a project, and this was Helka – which did so in the case of Citizen Channel (which will be presented in more detail in subchapter 5.2). The interim evaluation of the programme 2005–2007 suggested a stronger bottom-up method of policy preparation and a model of interaction during the whole programming period, where “weak signals” from citizens, residents, companies, researchers or other actors would be acknowledged in the formulation of the programme (Uusikylä et al. 2007). This was taken into account to some extent in the preparation of the Urban Programme 2008–2010 where stakeholders were involved in preparatory workshops (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2008–2010).

The relationship of the Urban Programme to municipal democracy can be characterised as indirect and representing the ideals of strategic steering, which in the literature is often seen as the main form of metagovernance conducted by elected politicians (cf. Le Galès 2002, Granberg 2004, Pinson 2009, Skelcher et al. 2013, see also Chapter 2.3). However, the democratic reference point for the Urban Programmes changed as the metropolitan collaboration developed in parallel with them.

The programming document for the Urban Programme 2002–2004 emphasised the conformity of the programme with a number of municipal, regional and national strategies and policies. The first programme went also through broader consultation with stakeholders than the second and included a stronger rhetoric of citizen participation. In the documents for the first Urban Programme, the mayors, who had an important role in the launching of the programme, were seen as holders of the operative responsibility emanating from the municipal councils’ political mandate. The emphasis on the notion of “operative work” in the programming documents 2002–2004 meant a need to show that the programme was part of a chain of political

accountability, ultimately based on strategic steering conducted by elected politicians. (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma. Osaaminen ja osallisuus.) According to the interim evaluation of the first Urban Programme, there were nevertheless two different conceptions of the role of the municipal councillors among the governance networks of the programme: some considered the indirect link sufficient, others wanted more information about the programme for councillors (Uusikylä & Valovirta 2003, 19) – a view supported by the programme evaluation (ibid., 24).

The role of representative municipal democracy in the context of metropolitan development changed between the first and second programming periods. The Helsinki Metropolitan Area Advisory Board, a cooperation body made up of leading elected officials of the four municipalities of the area, met for the first time in 2004. The Advisory Board approved a common vision and strategy for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area in 2004, and as was noted, the main objective and the lines of action of the Urban Programme 2005–2007 were formulated according to this strategy. The priorities of the Urban Programme were set according to the vision and strategy, which was a way to allow the Urban Programme, based on the activity of non-elected municipal officials, to interconnect with the institutions of representative municipal democracy and the strategic development of metropolitan collaboration.

In the policy documents, the establishment of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Advisory Board was strongly emphasised as representing a democratic mandate for the Urban Programme. According to the programming document of the Urban Programme 2005–2007, the implementation of the programme happened in a situation where for the first time there was a mandate drawn from a politically approved collaboration arena. According to this document, the discussion about metropolitan governance had intensified after the first programme, increasing the legitimacy of the policy measures. (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2005–2007, 4.)

If the programmes 2002–2004 and 2005–2007 are compared, it is evident that in the second programme (and also the Urban Programme 2008–2010 that followed it), democratic legitimacy was mainly related to the existence of newly established political structures at the metropolitan level, while the first programme had to draw its legitimacy from more disparate sources. However, in both programming documents, there was a clear need to demonstrate the democratic legitimacy of the Urban Programme. This shows that the question of representative democracy in the context of the Urban Programme is an important yet delicate issue, which is related not only to the mandate enjoyed by high-level municipal officials but also to the complicated issue of governance in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. This theme was also present in the interviews.

These main themes were taken from the declarations by the Advisory Board, the main points. I don't know whether it was the idea of those

who were preparing the Urban Programme or if it came from a higher level. But it was of course a show of respect towards the Advisory Board of politicians that these municipal officials took the main themes directly from there.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

The emphasis on “operative work” in the policy documents and in some of the interviews was not only a way to refer to the strategic framework to which the programme belonged, but also one to indicate that the programme was the task of non-elected municipal officials. Those municipal officials involved in the programme emphasised the practical and non-political nature of the programme in creating linkages and collaboration in their everyday work, as opposed to the strategic or political role of elected politicians.

The notion of urban policy that I sometimes used was seen as problematic in the interviews from two perspectives (see also von Bruun & Kirvelä 2009, 64). The first was the double meaning of the Finnish word *politiikka* as both “politics” and “policy”, as the high-level municipal officials saw their action as a form of policy and, consequently, highly apolitical (for similar findings from the Finnish LEADER work in the field of rural policy, see Nousiainen 2011). Second, the notion of urban policy was seen as referring to the more or less conflictual state-municipality relations in the development of metropolitan governance (see also Haila & Le Galès 2005), both as a way for the state to implement national urban and metropolitan policies and as one for the cities to try to influence the state. From this perspective, the municipalities involved in the Urban Programme emphasised its role as an independent municipal development programme which was not related to national urban policies or to the advocacy work of the municipalities with respect to the state. However, those interviewees who had been closely working with national urban policies did see the Urban Programme as an example of broader urban policy thinking even if they also emphasised the role the municipalities played in the programme.

[The Urban Programme] is our project cooperation in which the Uusimaa Regional Council and the state are also involved. But this is our operative collaboration. What we have done since 2004 among the cities has been planning work at the strategic level. These are a bit like two different worlds. (...) But since the 2005 programming period, this [Urban Programme] has been adapted to the three strategic pillars which are in accordance with the common vision, so in this way these worlds have met.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

This is a really small tool. And urban policy, after all, happens via other channels. I see the Urban Programme as having been a self-directed development programme, it hasn't had any political status. It

has been horizontal, networking people, quite a nice bit of variation in my own work, too. So it has not been a tool for doing politics.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

Even though the municipalities were the strongest actors in the Urban Programme, there was constant interaction with the state representatives which was not always without tension. From this perspective, the Urban Programme can be seen as an example of complex state-municipality relations in urban governance where even leading scholars are not unanimous as to who the strongest actors are and what the direction of the change is (Le Galès 2002, Le Galès 2005, Brenner 2004, see also Chapter 2.5). This was also reflected in many of the interviews. In the interviews, it was often mentioned that pressure from the state for metropolitan governance existed throughout the Urban Programme, even though the programme was in practice very much in the hands of the municipalities. However, for instance in the following interview citation municipalities were seen as the strongest actors in this relationship, despite the attempts of state representatives to put pressure on them.

There was at least one representative from the Ministry of the Interior (...), the funder [was] in a way involved in these discussions and probably steering the whole thing a bit. But the municipalities for instance still didn't want to broaden the sphere of actors, even though the state put pressure on them (...) to involve the broader region. The municipalities didn't accept that.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

Even though the Urban Programme management group included representatives from the state, existing municipal collaboration structures and the semi-public development company Culminatum, it can be said that generally, the steering of the Urban Programme was in the hands of non-elected municipal officials. As such, it represented in many ways the functioning of the traditional public administration – in other words, “government” rather than “governance”. In a comparison of European urban policies, these kinds of public-public partnerships are not uncommon. As has been noted in Chapter 2.5, urban policies are often based on relationships between various levels of administration, mainly the state and the municipalities. At the same time, there has been variation in the degree to which these partnerships have included market or civil society actors. Or as van den Berg et al. (2007c, 415 –416) put it, “these partnerships could be with other municipalities, higher layers of government, other public institutions, the business community etc.” and even if policy-makers attribute more weight to the interests of certain groups of citizens in the delivery of urban policies, it is not as strong as that attributed to the partnerships mentioned above.

However, a clear difference between the Urban Programme and the earlier relationship between the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was

that the Urban Programme provided a discussion and collaboration arena for the municipalities and marked a shift towards a more deliberative culture than existed before. As was noted in subchapter 5.1.2, governance scholars such as Hajer (2003b) see that a network- and collaboration-based form of action is likely to create trust especially in a situation of “institutional void”, defined as the lack of generally accepted rules and norms according to which politics is to be conducted and policy measures are to be agreed upon. This was also the most important result of the Urban Programme – despite its official policy objectives, which mainly followed the neo-liberal competitiveness agenda that characterises in general European (or Western) regional and urban policies (see Chapter 2.5). This being said, there were nevertheless some tensions behind the Urban Programme among the municipalities involved and between the municipalities and the state, which can be related to the complex and partly conflictual framework of metropolitan governance and the power relations between the state and the municipalities, also present in the international literature (Le Galès 2005, Brenner 2004).

Even though the Urban Programme was governed by (semi-)public actors, the individual projects served in principle to broaden the sphere of actors involved in the programme. However, as was noted, most of the projects were conducted by public or semi-public actors such as the development company Culminatum mentioned earlier. The participatory Citizen Channel project could be seen as an exception here in that it was managed by the Helsinki Neighbourhoods Association, Helka. In the next subchapter, this project will be analysed in detail.

5.2 THE CITIZEN CHANNEL PROJECT

ADMINISTRATION: THE URBAN PROGRAMME AS A FUNDING INSTRUMENT FOR DEVELOPING PARTICIPATION

Citizen Channel was one of the projects of the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area 2005–2007. The original aim of the project was to develop a model of interaction between the citizens and the municipal administration (including elected representatives) in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. During the course of the project, this objective was changed to the less ambitious aim of developing a “toolbox” for participation for the municipalities. From the perspective of the project administration, the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was primarily a funding instrument for the project, which had been planned for a long time before being funded from the Urban Programme. These two themes are developed further in this subchapter.

5.2.1 CITIZEN CHANNEL AS A TOOL TO DEVELOP PARTICIPATION

According to the original description of Citizen Channel, the objective of the project was to develop a model of interaction, a “citizen channel”, between the citizens and the administration of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area which would cross municipal and sector borders (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2005–2007: Hankerekisteri). Thematically, the project had two dimensions – on the one hand, the issue of participation and interaction between citizens, municipal officials and politicians, and on the other, the issue of crossing municipal borders or the metropolitan dimension – both of which it tried to intertwine. Sometimes in the interviews, the development of public services and feedback systems was even mentioned as a third, separate theme in the project.

The Citizen Channel project was managed by the Helsinki Neighbourhoods Association Helka. As was noted in Chapter 3.1, Finnish associations have traditionally had a layered structure, where local associations belong to a wider umbrella organisation. In the case of Helka, this means that neighbourhood associations belong to the umbrella organisation at the city level. Helka was founded in 1964 (Schulman & Staffans 2004, 7). At the moment, it has almost 80 member associations which cover geographically most of the neighbourhoods in Helsinki (Helka Helsingin kaupunginosayhdistykset ry./Kaupunginosayhdistykset). The Finnish tradition of resident associations was based on a cleavage between “resident” and “neighbourhood” or “district” associations – or more or less between associations of rental and owner-occupied housing. However, this distinction has diminished during recent decades and among the members of Helka, there are associations from both traditions as well as associations representing detached housing.

Citizen Channel was the only project in the Urban Programme conducted by an NGO, as the others projects were managed by municipal organisations or the semi-public development company Culminatum. In general, the actors of the Citizen Channel project administration included both municipal officials and representatives of NGOs. As was noted in Chapter 4.2, the management group of the Citizen Channel project was a relatively small group which consisted of municipal officials, the chairperson of Helka and the representative of the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. The steering group of the project consisted of a broader range of stakeholders working with issues of participation, both street-level municipal officials such as planners, researchers, and others from the field of social services, and umbrella organisations for neighbourhood associations, detached housing and community centres, together with the Finnish Society for Futures Studies. The project had a variety of participants, mainly from those pilot areas where it organised events. The most active people were activists from neighbourhood associations. Neighbourhood associations were also the main channels for spreading information about the project at the local level.

In practice, the project consisted of trying, testing and modelling a variety of different “participatory” tools. These included gathering contact

information for the central actors in the neighbourhood such as representatives of neighbourhood associations and other NGOs, representatives of local committees (i.e. institutionalised sub-municipal participatory structures), municipal officials and politicians, and representatives from community and youth centres, other local services and local companies. The project also organised various events at local level. These included local discussion forums, future workshops and local SWOT analyses (mapping local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), and meetings between residents and planners or other municipal officials. The project arranged two more general seminars aimed primarily at researchers and other development actors (in which I participated as a researcher).

One part of the project consisted of workshops with schoolchildren to solicit their views on their neighbourhoods. Another tool tested during the project was the development of “urban paths” in the neighbourhoods, which included mapping and presenting the central sights or otherwise interesting places in them. Libraries and local community centres (*asukastalot*) were particularly involved and were used as locations for many of the events. A distinct part of the project consisted of the development of “user democracy” or customer feedback on public services, leading to the establishment of a user democracy club and a publication on self-evaluation guidelines for customer feedback (*Käyttäjädemokratiaklubi* 2008). The Citizen Channel project was also interconnected with earlier work by Helka such as the development of neighbourhood-level Internet sites. Meanwhile, libraries participating in the project talked about the tools that they tested during the project, such as a mobile laptop class.

The activities of the project were organised in pilot areas where neighbouring districts belonged to different municipalities. There were two pilot areas, one along the borders of Helsinki, Vantaa and Espoo (sometimes referred to as *Kuninkaankolmio*, “the King’s Triangle”), which grew in significance over the course of the project, and another one along the border between Espoo and Kauniainen. In the beginning, the project organised workshops in the pilot areas. Even though the upper-level theme was to develop forms of participation, the project concentrated on concrete themes at local level. These themes were chosen in workshops in partnership with residents and consisted of traffic and public transport, the provision of services (such as health care) across municipal boundaries, and the development of the local river area of Mätäjoki/ Mätäoja.

During the project, the ambitious goal of developing a model for participation for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was changed into the more modest idea of developing of a “toolbox” that could be later used in other, similar contexts. The main reasons for this were the different ways in which citizen participation was organised in the four municipalities of the area and the opposition of the municipalities involved to a general model of participation (this issue will be dealt with in more detail in Chapters 6.2 and 7.3). The main results of Citizen Channel included forms of participation and

interaction which were identified and tested during the project. In the toolbox published at the end of the project, eight different “tools for interaction” were presented (Vuorovaikutuksen työkaluja alueen toimijoille). In Table 2, I have directly translated the objectives and the names of the tools, while the description is my own summary of a longer one which included other elements such as the opportunities and challenges of each tool.

Table 2. *Tools for interaction for local actors (Vuorovaikutuksen työkaluja alueen toimijoille)*

Objective	Tool	Description
Places for discussion and meeting – mapping impulses	Local forum/ border area forum	Open discussion forums for the neighbourhood (local forum), which can transcend municipal borders (border area forum)
	Meetings with experts	Regular meetings between residents, municipal officials and/or politicians, for instance in libraries
	Discussion forums on the Internet	Discussion/consultation, e.g. neighbourhood websites or metropolitan portal
Tools for disseminating local information	Neighbourhood home pages	Dissemination of local information, can be provided by various actors
	Local actor list/ local group	Contact information for central public, private and third sector actors (local actor list) or a group of these actors which meets regularly (local group)
Methods for collecting local information	Neighbourhood SWOT	Local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
	Maps as tools for collecting local information/ participatory GIS	Experience-based knowledge from neighbourhoods collected to a geographical information system
Tool for augmenting quality and helping evaluation	User democracy club/ the self-evaluation guidebook for client feedback	A group concentrating on the development of client feedback (user democracy club); self-evaluation guidelines for client feedback (guidebook)

The project presented three tools to facilitate discussions and meetings and to “map impulses” from the local level. These included open discussion forums at neighbourhood level (which could even extend across municipal borders if appropriate), regular meetings between residents and municipal officials or local politicians, and local discussion forums on the Internet. Neighbourhood

web sites were an important tool in the dissemination of local information. Another was gathering contact information for local associations, companies, municipal officials, politicians and other actors – a group of whom could then meet regularly and become known as a “local group”. Tools in the collection of local information consisted of local SWOT analyses (concentrating on local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) together with interactive geographic information systems (GIS) and maps. Finally, the project suggested the establishment of a “user democracy club” working with issues of client feedback.

These tools were presented in various forms in five brochures published by the project (Kanavaopas, Kansalaiskanava – Seutuyhteistyötä paikallistasolla a, Virtaa vuorovaikutukseen!, Vuorovaikutuksen työkaluja alueen toimijoille, Käyttäjädemokratiaklubi 2008). The results of the project were also disseminated through the Citizen Channel Internet site, the home pages of the Helsinki Neighbourhoods Association Helka and the metropolitan portal of the Helsinki Region.

As was noted in Chapter 2.3, new forms of governance are often linked to the development of more participatory and deliberative forms of democracy or sometimes, to other forms of post-liberal democracy. It can be said that the Citizen Channel project included both participatory and deliberative elements which were interwoven with each other as is often the case with participatory initiatives (however, the actual impact of participation in the project will be analysed more thoroughly in Chapter 7.2). The tools that were tested and published in the toolbox were for the most part open to local inhabitants. However, like many other participatory tools and initiatives, they concerned primarily those “active citizens” who were willing to participate actively and had the opportunity to do it (see also Chapters 2.3 and 5.3). Some of the tools presented concerned more restrictive forms of participation such as local actor lists or “local groups” concentrating on a limited number of local NGO representatives, companies and the like, together with municipal officials and politicians.

During the course of the project, numbers of participants varied from event to event. There was a core group of neighbourhood association activists who were the most actively involved citizens in the project. From the perspective of representativeness, this group remained relatively limited, even though the neighbourhood association activists represented their background associations (and more generally, “active inhabitants” in their neighbourhoods, as will be noted in Chapter 5.3). However, some of the events organised by the project managed to involve greater numbers of residents.

From a deliberative perspective, the project emphasised the creation of local networks and the role of discussion between residents and municipal officials in the neighbourhoods through various meetings, local forums and the like. This theme was also present in the project publications, which emphasised the creation of local networks and forums as specific “tools for interaction”. The tools were based on the idea of discussion rather than voting

or aggregating preferences. The multi-actor and networked character of these tools was seen in the interviews as a way to enhance discussion between actors from different backgrounds. The neighbourhood association activists who participated in the project talked of a consensual atmosphere in the meetings and activities.

In some of the interviews among the project administration, a critical and conflictual form of participation was not seen as fitting the framework of the project. This has been seen in previous research: the consensual framework of urban projects does not include critical voices (Pinson 2009, 378–381). More generally, both in political science and planning literature, the creation of collaborative and networked forms of governance – not to mention many democratic innovations – have been criticised for not offering arenas for conflict (Mouffe 1993, 2000, Flyvbjerg 1998, Hillier 2003, Rosanvallon 2006, Häikiö & Leino 2014a). At the same time, studies on urban participatory processes have shown the existence of a resident group that does not limit its repertoire to the forms of “invited participation” suggested by the public administration, but uses all possible means to get its message heard (Leino 2006). All these themes can be traced in the citation below from a representative of the project administration.

There was a group of active people who were very keenly involved and they were really eager beavers in their own neighbourhoods, too. And they were getting along really well. (...) But then in this group there are these people who are like nimbies, who just complain about everything and want the city to do stuff for them. And they tried to take advantage of our Citizen Channel, like “Can you make a complaint about this and can you take a stand on that issue”, even if it was not our job. (...) But they mainly appeared only when they had a burning issue in the area, then they were seen and they tried to use all possible channels to advance their cause.

Project administration, NGO or other association

This citation illustrates a problem that has been presented in the literature about local knowledge (see e.g. Staffans 2004, Niemenmaa 2005). Sometimes it is difficult to draw a line between the residents’ local knowledge and the NIMBY syndrome. At the same time, “nimbyism” can also be used as a pejorative label by the public administration (or other actors setting frames for participatory processes) in order to dismiss critical voices. The citation above shows a relatively normative juxtaposition between the “eager beavers”, useful to the project, and the “nimbies” who tried to extract benefit from it. In the context of the Citizen Channel project, this problem stemmed in part from its double strategy of concentrating on concrete local issues in pilot areas and at the same time seeking to develop a model or toolbox for participation. This theme will be analysed further in Chapter 7.2.

According to the interviews, the working logic inside the Citizen Channel project administration was based equally on discussion and deliberation. The way in which the steering and management groups worked was based on consensus rather than bargaining or voting. Like the Urban Programme management group, the project administration created collaboration and consensus among the various actors involved in it. However, the actors in the project came from a less conflictual background than the municipalities in the Urban Programme. Moreover, they had a common interest in developing participation and according to the interviews, many of them already knew each other before the project (see also Chapter 7.1).

[In the steering group] there was quite a good spirit – a creative spirit even, so that sometimes we discussed ideas more than would have been necessary in a meeting.

Project administration, municipality

Despite the consensual mode of decision-making inside the project administration, the interviewees nevertheless mentioned situations where the management group steered and framed the project and opposed suggestions from the steering group or project managers. One such situation was when the original idea of the project – to create a general model of participation for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area – was reframed so that it became a less ambitious toolbox of “tools for interaction” because of opposition from the municipalities represented in the management group (see Chapters 6.2 and 7.3). Some of the interviewees in the project administration were quite critical about this and saw such forms of steering as limiting the innovative logic of the project. Even though this might be seen as a rupture in the otherwise deliberative logic of the project, the steering of the project by the municipalities involved can be interpreted as the municipalities performing their role as metagovernors or more precisely as representatives of municipal administrations drawing ultimate legitimacy from the elected decision-making structures (cf. Sørensen 2007, Jessop 2011, Torfing & Triantafillou 2011a).

The management group, however, defined the lines of action for our project. (...) They pushed it a bit in a direction where we wouldn't break loose and actually present a model for local administration. Of course we had to navigate somehow how we could present these things, because things were like this, we wanted to express them without this feeling of censorship. But there wasn't, of course, much of this interference.

Project administration, NGO or other association

In the project steering group, there were according to the interviews some other tensions which did not lead to open conflict but remained unsolved. First, there was the issue of balancing the objectives between modelling and

concrete action. Some members of the steering group would have wanted the project to be more concrete and criticized the development of a model of participation. At the same time, proponents of the original project idea regarded the project as a fairly typical one for the purpose of developing participatory tools and would have wanted one that was more visionary and future-oriented. Second, the broader relationships between representative and direct democracy and between association-based and direct participation were open questions that were not adequately addressed during the project, according to some interviews (see Chapter 6.1). A third source of divergent opinions was the way in which the results of the project should be presented. The project ended up publishing its results as a relatively concrete set of brochures and Internet pages, but some members of the steering group would have wanted a book showing the plurality of approaches around the issue of participation.

As was noted earlier, the original aim of the Citizen Channel project was to involve all the three central actor groups in municipal politics – elected persons of trust, non-elected municipal officials and residents. In practice, the role of representative municipal democracy remained modest. This was due, according to the interviews, more to the municipal councillors themselves than to the wishes of the project organisers. In Citizen Channel, elected politicians participated very little, even though the organisers of the project (as well as some participants) would have wanted a more active role for them (see also Häikiö 2005, Warren 2009). However, according to the interviews, some members of the management group considered the link between citizens and non-elected municipal officials to be sufficient. Here, the interviewees made particular mention of the fact that the administrative culture of Helsinki supported a strong position for non-elected municipal officials, which can be noted in the following citation.

[The persons in positions of trust] were involved very little, almost not at all. (...) And when I was pondering it in our project management group, they sort of thought that we should give up. Some were even of the opinion why should [councillors] be involved in a project like this. (...) Maybe differences in the administrative cultures of the three cities were pronounced, because Helsinki is more strongly driven by non-elected municipal officials than the other two [i.e. Espoo and Vantaa].

Project administration, NGO or other association

In general, it can be said that the aim of Citizen Channel was to develop participation and interaction between citizens and the public administration (broadly seen as consisting both of elected and non-elected officials) in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The issue of citizen participation, which was a relatively modest presence in the Urban Programme, was the leading theme of the project. From the perspective of the project administration, the Urban Programme was mainly a funding instrument for a project that had been

planned for a long time by the central actors. This theme is analysed more in detail in the next subchapter.

5.2.2 URBAN PROGRAMME AS A FUNDING INSTRUMENT

From the point of view of the Citizen Channel project, the Urban Programme was primarily a funding instrument. The preparation of the project was a long-term process, where the objectives and the central actors changed several times. According to the interviews, the conception of the project could be traced to an informal event held by the Finnish Society for Futures Studies in 2001 where some active members of the association started talking about a joint project (however, as will be noted in Chapter 7.3, other actors in the project network related the Citizen Channel project to their experiences from other projects or initiatives). In spring 2002 they formed a core group, which included actors from the Finnish Society for Futures Studies, municipal officials (some of whom were already retired) and researchers. The central theme of the embryonic project was how residents at the local level could discuss and create visions for the long-term future of their area. The idea was that this visioning would not concentrate solely on a single policy field or municipality, but on the Helsinki Metropolitan Area as a whole.

In the beginning, the project did not have its own funding; it was based on the activity of the core group. According to the interviews, the first attempt to concretise their ideas was the organising of three future workshops in the autumn of 2002 titled “Finland 2017 Wonderland” (in the later phase, the project was also referred to as “Helsinki Metropolitan Region 2017 Wonderland”, Fabricius 2004, 66), which were funded by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. During the preparatory phase, Helka, the umbrella association of neighbourhood associations in Helsinki, became involved. The project also drew in Helka’s counterpart from Espoo, EKYL, and the Helsinki Building Association (Fabricius 2004, 66). During 2003 and 2004, the project organised workshops in which neighbourhood associations employed SWOT analyses and defined the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of their own areas (Espoon Kaupunginosayhdistysten Liitto ry. 2003). These results were later integrated into the Citizen Channel project (see e.g. Sipilä 2005).

According to the interviews, the priorities of the project changed in the preparation phase from the original idea of visioning the future towards a more general development of participation and interaction between residents and municipal officials. During the development phase of the project, many of the original activists moved into the background because of the change in the priorities or for personal reasons. Some of the original actors in particular would have preferred a more future-oriented approach in the Citizen Channel project. More generally, one theme in the interviews was the development of projects and their priorities over time, which was especially picked up on by those actors who had been involved in Citizen Channel from the beginning.

In 2004, the project applied for money from the Urban Programme for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and in 2005, the project finally started. For Helka and the other actors around the embryonic project, the inclusion of Citizen Channel in the Urban Programme was an opportunity to get funding for a project which had at that point been in the planning phase for a few years with only a few events and small-scale forms of action. As the following citation shows, funding from the Urban Programme enabled the development of a model of participation. However, as will be further elaborated in Chapter 7.1, it was also an opportunity for the central actors, especially Helka, to enhance their competences in project management and the development of participation and to assume a role as an intermediary organisation between the municipal administration and the grassroots level. All these themes are present in the following citation from the project administration.

We heard about that money and negotiated for a very long time and ground the project into such a form that we could get funding for three years. It was quite a nice spurt; we got visibility and developed our own competence and these tools and printed leaflets and the model then.

Project administration, NGO or other association

When the developers of the original project idea decided to apply for funding from the Urban Programme, they had to change the objectives of the project so that it would fit the framework of the programme. First, the concrete nature of the tools and forms of participation developed during the project became more pronounced in relation to the more abstract idea of citizens creating visions for the future. Second, the project had to include a metropolitan perspective, which had already been partly addressed in the original project idea of inhabitants visioning the future. The metropolitan dimension was present in Citizen Channel both in the idea of creating a model for participation for the whole Helsinki Metropolitan Area – which during the project was transformed into the more modest idea of a “toolbox” for participation (see Chapters 6.2 and 7.3) – as well as in the selection of the target or pilot areas for the project, which were chosen so that they crossed municipal boundaries. According to the interviews, the second priority became more pronounced during the course of the project.

When the programme papers for the Urban Programme were written, at that time [Citizen Channel] was still a more future-oriented project and it can be said that during the process when it was rammed onto the Urban Programme it changed. And then during the Urban Programme, it changed a lot, too. [In the early publication of the project] they said what they would like to be. It looks very different from the end, this tool of interaction. (Project administration, municipality or municipal organisation)

The original idea was to create a general model for citizen participation and influence in a neighbourhood. And then the theme changed along the way, so that the management group emphasised the metropolitan dimension or this King's Triangle area [the pilot area of the project which transcended municipal boundaries].

Project administration, municipality

Third, the project had to include the issue of competitiveness in order to fit in the Urban Programme framework. This was especially evident when the project applied for funding. In her analysis of the projectification (in her analysis, “projectisation”) of Finnish gender equality work, Kristiina Brunila (2009) has made similar findings. According to her, projectification has directed the way in which equality has to be presented in order to be heard. This has enhanced the visibility of such issues but also set a framework for the ways in which equality may be presented. In the case of Citizen Channel, the framework of urban competitiveness was the discourse that had to be used in order to get funding from the Urban Programme. Some interviewees were very critical and questioned the prevailing “mantra” of urban competitiveness. However, competitiveness was also seen as a framework which project actors on had to get used to in order to obtain funding.

When asked about the relationship between competitiveness and citizen participation, the most typical answer from the interviewees was that a city that is a nice living place where citizens can participate can also be competitive. This reasoning can be linked to two discussions: the ideas of Richard Florida (2002), who spoke about a tolerant atmosphere as one element to attract the “creative class” and thus lead to regional economic performance; and thinking around social cohesion and discussion about the role of social capital in the creation of local economic performance (e.g. Putnam 1993). These lines of reasoning resembled the way participation was seen in Urban Programme policy documents and in earlier international literature on urban governance (see Chapter 2.5). Even actors that were not involved in the Citizen Channel project and were not aware of its priorities used the same kind of legitimation. As was noted in Chapter 2.5, the “New Conventional Wisdom” of urban policy (Buck et al. 2005) is based on the idea that the issues of competitiveness and social cohesion are interlinked and reinforce one another. This idea has also been thoroughly interiorised by Finnish urban development actors.

And this competitiveness mantra is, of course, repulsive for me and for many. (...) [But] there could be pleasant, interesting neighbourhoods, with interesting things happening (...) We had to think in relation to the high level objectives and criteria, so that this helps in this way your high level objectives. And we bent it and twisted it of course quite creatively.

Project administration, NGO or other association

In our opinion, [the development of participation] was related to competitiveness. If you start to rationalise it, of course the better people feel in a city, the more they are willing to work for that city.

Project administration, NGO or other association

The way in which the concept of competitiveness was opposed or reformulated at the project level was interesting from the point of view of the politics–policy divide, as the level of policy became a site for the (re)interpretation of the higher-level political objectives (Hajer 2003a, Häikiö 2005, 15–18 Barnes & Prior 2009). At the same time, the literature on strategic steering in cities emphasises the loose formulation of urban strategies and objectives (Buck et al. 2005, Pinson 2009). The issue of competitiveness is given special mention as a typical example of a vague strategic framework which can be interpreted in a variety of ways. (Tolkki et al. 2011, 53, see also Gordon & Buck 2005).

Pinson (2009, 332–334) refers to the broader framework inside which individual projects are situated as a “metaproject”. This metaproject does not only include the formal strategic framework of individual projects, but a broader vision and policy horizon, often presented in relatively vague terms so that all the actors in the governance networks can abide by them. This metaproject is in practice related to concrete individual projects by a policy discourse, which is a way to steer individual projects without the need to use a strict regulatory framework. According to Pinson, the policy discourse evolves as the project work advances. In the beginning, it is a general slogan created by high-level political actors. As the project work continues, the policy discourse is incorporated into the discourse of the politicians, officials and professionals, which sets the frame of reference for individual projects. According to Pinson, policy discourses replace the stricter forms of steering and regulation. However, they can be changed, because they are informal and because of the logic of constant evaluation present in project work.

Even if the Citizen Channel project was compelled to use the language of competitiveness in its application, the issue of competitiveness was not strongly present in the concrete realisation of the project. Only those actors who were closely involved in the writing of the project application or in the hands-on project work – such as the project managers and the other personnel from Helka or the central actors who had participated in the preparation of the project – knew the framework of the Urban Programme well. The more peripheral project actors, such as the stakeholders in the steering group of the project, concentrated on the activities organised during the Citizen Channel project and did not necessarily know about the priorities of the Urban Programme.

The interviewees in the Citizen Channel project administration saw the Urban Programme primarily as a funding instrument. This was not seen as a problem in the interviews, as it was the logic to which the actors had to adapt when they implemented projects. Similarly, the institutionalisation of participatory devices in France has been the consequence of the

institutionalisation of French urban policy, which former activists and independent urban research organisations have had to accept if they have wanted to work in the field (Nonjon 2012). In the Finnish context, Siisiäinen and Kankainen (2009) have emphasised the managerial project logic that NGOs have to adopt in order to get project financing. Kristiina Brunila (2009) sees this as concerning the discourse that project actors have to employ and the ways in which they have to frame their issues in order to get funding. In the interviews with the actors of Citizen Channel, the respondents emphasised the relatively broad room for manoeuvre that individual projects enjoy in policy programmes, even though they have to follow the priorities of the programme in the applications and at the rhetorical level.

There was one exception among the project administrators who saw the Urban Programme's priorities and funding instruments as being too rigid. However, even this interviewee stated that this was not the general view across the project administration. It must be noted that part of the changes to the priorities of the Citizen Channel project were related to the requirements of the Urban Programme. However, simultaneous with the inclusion of the project in the Urban Programme, there were other changes among the actors and alterations to its objectives. The original actors around the embryonic project saw a shift towards a more general participatory project instead of a more future-oriented project, partly because of the requirements of the Urban Programme and partly because of changes in the core actors.

[The Urban Programme] was just a framework, the funding came from there. And it didn't go further than that, we just talked about the development of the competitiveness of the urban region, so it was just a frame for us, we got money with it. [So that is] how we all have suddenly turned out supporting it [competitiveness]. But what does it matter when we can develop participation, which has in any case been the thing here.

Project administration, NGO or other association

In the Urban Programme it is said that [the project] needs to go according to this pattern if you want to get funding, and everybody knows it needs the funding if there's something you want to do. So the project is more likely to be flexible than the programme.

Project administration, NGO or other association

It can be concluded that even if the Urban Programme mainly concentrated on the issue of competitiveness in its official policy objectives and on creating consensus and collaboration between competing municipalities in practice, the main aim of the Citizen Channel project was to develop citizen participation. Unlike the Urban Programme which was steered by public or semi-public actors, most strongly by municipal officials, Citizen Channel was an NGO-led project which also involved street-level municipal officials in its

steering group and more high-level municipal officials in the management group. From the perspective of the Citizen Channel project administration, the Urban Programme was mainly a funding instrument whose objectives had to be taken into account in the project application phase but to a lesser extent during the actual realisation of the project.

Besides securing funding for a long-time project plan, the Urban Programme benefited Helka and the project administration of Citizen Channel in other ways. The project gave Helka the opportunity to work as a partner of the municipalities – something that the association had already done before (e.g. Fabricius 2004, Schulman & Staffans 2004), but not in a project of the kind that Citizen Channel represented. The Citizen Channel project enhanced Helka's competence as a project organiser and more specifically, as an expert in issues of citizen participation. The project steering group created an opportunity to gather together experts working on citizen participation from different sectors and from the different municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. All these themes will be dealt more thoroughly in Chapter 7.1. The next subchapter will concentrate on the actual participants in the Citizen Channel project – the neighbourhood association activists and the librarians involved in the project.

5.3 THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE CITIZEN CHANNEL PROJECT: CONCRETE ISSUES, ACTIVE CITIZENS

At the grassroots level, Citizen Channel organised a range of activities in its pilot areas and drew a variety of local residents to them. In addition, the project was involved in the organising of some broader seminars on the development of democracy and on the results of the project, which mainly involved researchers and public officials (and in which I participated myself). The project included the establishment of a user democracy club, which was very active and produced a publication about the self-evaluation of customer feedback. The user democracy club, however, remained relatively distinct from the rest of the project. The most active people in the project were activists from neighbourhood associations. Even though the Citizen Channel project created Internet pages and printed brochures, neighbourhood associations acted as central channels for spreading information about the project at the local level. In the pilot areas, libraries and community centres also served as central nodes for project activities.

The interviews with the participants in the Citizen Channel project consisted of two groups of people, neighbourhood association activists and library workers who had participated in the project and whose contact information I had obtained from the project administration. In the analysis of these interviews, two findings in particular stood out. First, the participants in the project concentrated on the concrete local issues in their neighbourhoods and the role of local networks instead of the more abstract issue of creating a

model of participation for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Second, the neighbourhood association members who participated most actively in the project had a long background in local participation and could be seen as “active citizens” in their neighbourhoods and in broader urban policy networks. I will explore these two aspects in detail in the following subchapters.

5.3.1 CONCRETE ISSUES

According to the interviews, the overarching Urban Programme and the official targets of the Citizen Channel project were relatively unknown among the activists from neighbourhood associations who participated in the project. From their perspective, the main results of Citizen Channel were developments on specific local issues and the creation of new linkages and networks, especially with actors from neighbouring districts.

In the interviews, the neighbourhood association activists who had been active in the project concentrated primarily on concrete local issues that affected their neighbourhoods and on current developments in metropolitan collaboration. Sometimes these issues were directly related to the Citizen Channel project, but the interviewees often mentioned several phenomena that were going on in their neighbourhoods independently of the project. Very often the interviewees mixed up the Citizen Channel project with the broader development of metropolitan collaboration. In my interpretation, this was partly because the project organised discussion events in the neighbourhoods on local issues that transcended municipal borders and the residents supposed that the project was directly related to them or somehow promoting them. I will come back to this theme later in this subchapter.

I don't know if [Citizen Channel] has affected this collaboration across municipal borders so that you can take your children to the kindergarten [across the municipal border]. And then, now we got this health centre opened, I don't know if it [depended] on Citizen Channel, maybe it was useful in that. (...) Then there are the regional ticket tariffs, there were these events on regional transport. (...) So there have been [activities] that have probably enhanced this collaboration.

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

The participants in the project did not consist only of neighbourhood associations activists, as one part of the project involved organising different activities and networking in the libraries of the pilot areas. As with the neighbourhood association activists, the librarians that I interviewed talked primarily about the situation in their neighbourhoods and were not acquainted with the Urban Programme or the official objectives of the Citizen Channel project. As with the activists, the project had given them the opportunity to establish new networks across municipal borders. However,

whereas the residents mainly talked about local issues, some of the librarians could also mention specific tools or forms of action that had been useful in the project. During the Citizen Channel project, they had organised events where citizens could meet municipal officials – for example planners. Sometimes the project had enabled the adoption of small-scale innovations in the libraries such as the establishment of a wireless laptop class. Some of these activities continued after the project finished and in some cases, the libraries had applied for new funding for these forms of action. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 7.3, some of the librarians were more sceptical about projects.

We first had metropolitan cooperation with [a neighbourhood at the other side of the municipal border] which was totally unknown to us, and for that reason one of the meetings was there. Our benefit was that we could borrow from Helsinki this wireless laptop class (...). Then, [in Vantaa], they organised this “Have an influence in the metropolitan region” day which was a success there. And especially there, they had a new head for the library, so it was useful for her as she got contacts with the actors in the area.

Project participant, librarian

In earlier research, Leino and Laine (2012) have stated that matters of concern matter in citizen participation and that the theoretical discussion on the subject has lost sight of this fact. This was evident in the interviews with the resident actors and, to some extent, the librarians. They were mainly involved in the project because of their interest in concrete issues in their neighbourhoods and because of their desire to create broader local networks across municipal borders. In the interviews, local issues were in general seen as the main driver for citizen participation at the neighbourhood level. There was a general understanding in the interviews with all the actor groups that the involvement of residents must be channelled through concrete issues of everyday life, such as the functioning of the local environment and local public services. This was one of the central starting points for the Citizen Channel project, as the following citation from the project administration shows.

[The neighbourhood association activists,] they don’t necessary come along to all sorts of nonsense there. It has to be related really closely to everyday life and to the development of the everyday things in the neighbourhood, the local environment, parks, streets, transport, services, directly to living.

Project administration, NGO or other association

When the interviews with the neighbourhood association activists and library workers were compared to those with the project administration, one issue was especially prominent. Officially, the aim of the Citizen Channel project was

to create a model of participation. However, as was noted, the residents in particular emphasised concrete local issues, which, sometimes, were not even the results of the Citizen Channel project (like crossing municipal boundaries when choosing day care for children). As was noted above, “matters matter” and concrete issues are important drivers of participation. It can be stated that the working logic of civil society, or more precisely, neighbourhood association activists, is different from that of those actors that actually develop participation, be they public actors or NGOs.

In a much-cited article on what he calls “engineering democracy”, Ricardo Blaug (2002) emphasises the different logics of citizen participation emanating from the grassroots level and the development of participation by various actors, be they “a government, an NGO or an individual community organizer” (ibid., 109). Even if Blaug does not recognise simple either/or categories, his analysis is mainly based on the idea that bottom-up citizen participation emanates from the tradition of “critical democracy” (or, put simply, protest), whereas the participatory initiatives come from that of “incumbent democracy” (ultimately based on the core institutions of representative democracy and a conservative rather than transformative logic). However, the juxtaposition between consensual and conflictual views on the civil society-state relation (see also Chapters 2.3 and 2.5) does not capture the differences in the Citizen Channel project, which was mainly based on a consensual working logic among both the project administration and the participants. As was noted, the biggest difference between the project administration and the participants was to see participation as an object of development from the perspective of the project administration and as a way to address concrete local issues from that of the participating neighbourhood association activists.

In his analysis, John Friedmann (1998, 28) partially circumvents the consensus-conflict divide by opting for a third interpretation according to which “civil society is ultimately for itself”. As he puts it, “within the constraints of structural imperatives, it is in its attention to small things that the quality of our life is found. We make the city serve our needs by moulding the physical appearance of streets into distinctive neighbourhoods.” According to this interpretation, the “everyday life” aspect is the most important dimension in neighbourhood participation, which was also the case with the participants of the Citizen Channel project. At the same time, participation has a political role in promoting issues and informing political decision-makers about local problems (cf. the literature on “local knowledge” as presented in Chapter 2.5). This “everyday life” was the main reason for the participating inhabitants to get involved in the project.

However, in Citizen Channel, the differences in working logic and views on participation between the participants and the project administration can also have another explanation. The different interpretations of the project were to some extent related to the way in which the project had been “marketed” to local residents. The project organisers did not believe that the development of

participation would be interesting enough to attract local residents to the various meetings and activities organised by the project. Because of this, when organising the project's concrete activities, they began from local issues, many of them chosen together with residents, such as services, transport connections and the development of a local river area. Consequently, the participants were not necessarily aware of the objective of developing participation. This issue is treated more in detail in Chapter 7.2.

If the first finding in the interviews with the participants was the emphasis on the concrete local issues, the second finding concerned the role and status of the neighbourhood association activists. They could primarily be characterised by the notion of active citizens often seen as central to the development of new forms of participation. This theme will be addressed further in the next subchapter.

5.3.2 ACTIVE CITIZENS

Another central finding in the interviews with the neighbourhood association activists who participated in the Citizen Channel project was that they represented the ideal of active citizenship, often present in the development of new forms of participation (e.g. Barnes et al. 2007, van de Wijdeven & Hendriks 2009, Eriksson & Vogt 2013, Skelcher et al. 2013). The idea of active citizenship has also been seen in the earlier literature as the main characteristic of projects and the project society in general (Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, Sulkunen 2006). The activists from neighbourhood associations who took part in the Citizen Channel project were already active in their neighbourhoods and the broader society before the project, many of them over several decades. They were important actors in their neighbourhoods and had assumed an advocacy role towards policy-makers on various local issues such as the organisation of public transport or the improvement of traffic safety. They had also created broad networks among local actors and had relations with municipal officials and the institutions of the municipal administration. There was a constant interaction between their role as active citizens and the current issues in their neighbourhoods that they were promoting or trying to solve.

Then this neighbourhood association activity, (...) it actually started about twenty years ago when my older son got hit by a car at a pedestrian crossing. And then I started to think whether residents could affect the safety of their local environment and I collected names from the neighbouring housing companies so that there would be a raised pedestrian crossing. And it started from there.

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

In a way, I have already been doing the same work [as in Citizen Channel] here in our area, of course not so much across the [municipal]

border, except that (...) we have for instance been able to keep this bus line [crossing the municipal border]. (...) In that way Citizen Channel was for me a familiar thing, I just went there like “ok, it’s a good thing that it goes a bit across the border”.

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

Besides the neighbourhood associations, the interviewees were also often active elsewhere, such as in municipal politics, political parties and in the elected area councils that existed at the time of the interviews both in Espoo and Vantaa. Even though several of the neighbourhood association activists (either interviewed directly or referred to in the interviews) were involved in party politics, they were primarily interested in the local area and concrete issues. For instance, one of the interviewees said that they were involved in party politics primarily as a resident activist who could in that way participate in municipal committees and have broader connections to the wider city. However, not all of those interviewed held party memberships.

I have always been interested in what is built on the neighbouring plot or whether local services work, this is the thing. When I lived in Espoo I had a small son and I couldn’t get him to day care so I put together a petition. (...) I had a cause which was real for me. So I have fought for these things all my life, or made a noise about them, let’s say. And then, of course, I have a political background, because otherwise you don’t get on these committees and then you have a reference group. (...) I don’t [care] much about politics, but it’s like the framework.

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

The neighbourhood association activists who were interviewed for this study shared some elements in common with the two activist archetypes that have developed in the context of governance presented in the studies of Bang and Sørensen (1999, 2001, see also Chapter 2.3). As was noted in Chapter 2.3, “Everyday Makers” are active lay people who are characterised by slogans such as “do it yourself”, “do it where you are”, “do it concretely instead of ideologically” or “do it with the system if need be” (for the complete list, see Bang and Sørensen 2001, 156). According to Bang and Sørensen, even though these people, to a greater or lesser extent, vote and keep themselves informed about “high politics”, their political identity is primarily based on their action and networks at the local level. However, in this study, the neighbourhood association activists interviewed had a more profound engagement with their local activism than the “ad hoc or part time” attitude of Everyday Makers, and this extended to their party membership. As such, the neighbourhood association activists also encompassed elements of the “Expert Activists” (Bang and Sørensen 2001) who are more deeply involved in governance networks and have a more strategic approach to them than the Everyday Makers.

As was noted in Chapter 2.3, in their study on Dutch neighbourhoods, Ted van de Wijdeven and Frank Hendriks (2009) have further developed the model of Everyday Makers and Expert Activists into the ideal types of “neighbourhood experts” (who are structurally involved and follow the institutional logic), “case experts” (who are involved on an ad hoc basis but also follow the institutional logic), “everyday fixers” (who are structurally involved but follow the situational logic) and finally, “project conductors” (who are involved on an ad hoc basis and follow the situational logic). The Citizen Channel participants clearly exhibited aspects of the structural involvement and institutional logic of the “neighbourhood experts”. However, their emphasis on current and constantly changing local issues was also shared with the ideal type of “everyday fixers” who wanted to “get things done in a concrete way” (van de Wijdeven & Hendriks 2009, 130).

It must nevertheless be noted that even if these neighbourhood association activists were involved in a project like Citizen Channel, they had a much longer and more established background in their neighbourhood (and often, in political institutions), which made them different from the ad hoc types of “case experts” and “project conductors”. As will be discussed in Chapter 6.1, this long-term commitment of these neighbourhood association activists made them different from the younger generation, which uses a more ad hoc form of action. In the case of neighbourhood development in Helsinki, this has even meant the parallel existence of established neighbourhood associations, which often have problems recruiting younger members, and loose Facebook groups and other networks referred by Tulikukka (2012, 86) as “town village movements”, which are active around events and local development.

In Finnish research, these most active resident activists have sometimes been called “super types” (Staffans 2002) or “power actors” (Staffans 2004). According to the analysis by Staffans (2004), these people have become professional “advocates of everyday life” who have solid expertise on local issues and are embedded in local networks. The participants in the Citizen Channel project mentioned in the interviews several local issues where they had been or were at that time advocates. The networks of the neighbourhood association activists interviewed consisted of relationships with activists from other neighbourhood associations, with municipal officials, with the established participatory structures in their areas such as local committees and often, with political parties and municipal boards.

For the citizens participating in the Citizen Channel project, the main benefit from the project was not the idea that they were “activated” or “empowered”, as they were already active in their neighbourhoods and in the broader society (see also van de Wijdeven & Hendriks 2009). As such, Citizen Channel differed from the empowerment projects typical of social urban policy, where the aim is to activate disadvantaged groups, often in worse-off neighbourhoods (Kuokkanen 2005, Smith et al. 2007, Eliasoph 2011; see also Chapter 2.5). Such projects have been implemented in Finnish suburbs, especially as a part of the EU’s urban policy (Bäcklund & Schulman 2003,

Kuokkanen forthcoming a). However, as Helka is the umbrella association for neighbourhood associations, its members are effectively those of the neighbourhood associations who are active in their own districts. According to the interviews, Helka as an organisation had not been directly trying to activate passive groups, although it did collaborate with the city of Helsinki, which was working with underrepresented groups.

Traditionally, our members are these active people who are already activated by themselves. We haven't done much to try to activate completely passive groups – that's more an issue for social services. But we have lots of connections and contacts with them, and the social services office in Helsinki works to support local groups.

Project administration, NGO or other association

The analysis of the interviews with the citizens participating in Citizen Channel presents a picture of the active resident interested in local issues. However, because of the double strategy of the Citizen Channel project to concentrate both on the development of a model of resident participation and on actual issues in the pilot areas, the impact of the residents participating on the model or toolbox remained relatively modest (this thematic will be analysed further in Chapter 7.2). In the next subchapter, the overall picture of the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project and the interpretations of the various actor groups involved in them will be considered more in detail.

5.4 SUMMING UP: VARIOUS INTERESTS, VAGUE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The conclusions of this chapter can be summarised as follows: There were differences in the objectives, interests, actors and forms of action between the Urban Programme, the Citizen Channel project administration and the participants of the project (see also Kuokkanen 2013, 2014). In particular, the aim of the Citizen Channel project and the role of citizen participation in it and in the Urban Programme in general were presented differently in the interviews with the three different actor groups. These interpretations mirror more broadly the roles that these actor groups had in the Urban Programme and in the Citizen Channel project. Moreover, the entity formed by the programme and the project gives a nuanced picture of strategic steering and metagovernance. These themes will be developed in this concluding subchapter.

Among the Urban Programme management group, the most important dimension of the programme was the way in which it had created linkages and brought about a dialogue between the four cities, enabling the testing of new ways of action – opportunities for which were often limited in the context of Finland's strongly sectorised administration. At the same time, the official

objective of the programme was to develop urban competitiveness which can be seen as an international “super discourse” in urban and regional policy (see Chapter 2.5). In the Urban Programme, citizen participation was only one of several themes – and even a secondary theme. However, in the interviews, many of the upper-level officials spoke positively about the development of participation (although this finding requires some caveats, cf. Arnstein 1969). Moreover, it can be said the inclusion of Citizen Channel in the Urban Programme had a legitimising function for the programme in two ways. First, through the Citizen Channel project, the issue of citizen participation – although present in the rhetoric of the Urban Programme especially during the first programming period – was concretely included in the programme. Second, the inclusion of Helka among the actors that implemented the programme was in line with the programme’s principle of emphasising partnership, which was especially important as the programme was otherwise firmly in the hands of municipal and semi-municipal actors.

For the project administration, funding from the Urban Programme enabled a project that had already been planned for a long time among the activists from Helka and other actors to actually take place. From their perspective, the Urban Programme was mainly a funding instrument and the main interest of the project was the development of participation. The aim was to develop a model or a toolbox for participation that would remain after the project funding had ended. However, the inclusion of the Citizen Channel project in the Urban Programme had also other effects, such as strengthening the linkages between Helka and the municipal administration and confirming Helka’s role as a professional in the implementation of projects and more specifically, as an expert in citizen participation (these themes will be treated more in detail in Chapter 7.1).

At the grassroots level, the activists from neighbourhood associations concentrated on concrete local issues in their neighbourhoods; the Urban Programme and the formal objectives of Citizen Channel were relatively unknown to them. For them, Citizen Channel was mainly a tool for advocacy in local issues and for networking with other neighbourhood associations across municipal borders. The activists from neighbourhood associations were already active in their own neighbourhoods and often elsewhere – such as in municipal politics – before the project started. In the interviews with the librarians, the objectives of the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project were also relatively unknown, and from their perspective, the main benefit from the project was the enhancing of collaboration across municipal borders. Some of the librarians mentioned some small-scale innovations or forms of action that had been adopted in the libraries after the project, while others were more sceptical regarding the benefits of any project-based work.

The Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project involved a range of objectives, interests, actors and forms of political steering. The division into pessimistic and optimistic views on governance and democracy (see Chapter 2.3) is too simple in this case, as the governance of the entity formed by the

Urban Programme and Citizen Channel drew together relatively closed networks of non-elected upper-level officials, elements of strategic steering, the development of new forms of participation and deliberation, an active NGO and a group of resident activists.

Altogether, it can be said that the Urban Programme worked more according to the logic of traditional public administration and political steering than to that of new forms of participation and deliberation – or even “governance”, for that matter (cf. Kuokkanen 2013). Decision-making in the programme was mainly based on the strong role of municipalities. However, there were clearly more deliberative and consensual elements when compared to the competitive situation that had existed among the four cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area previously. This was hailed in the interviews as the most important achievement of the Urban Programme when compared to its official objectives. From the perspective of political mandate, the Urban Programme was mostly based on the action of high-level non-elected municipal officials, even though it had an indirect relationship with institutions of representative municipal democracy through strategic steering and the creation of new municipal collaboration forums. The programming documents and interviews showed that while the Urban Programme was seen as a practical and non-political form of action, there was at least on a rhetorical level a need to show its linkages to municipal democracy and metagovernance.

The Citizen Channel project had participatory and deliberative elements, as its main objective was to test and develop various forms of neighbourhood participation and interaction between citizens and municipal officials – including, in principle, elected officials (see also Kuokkanen 2013). However, the project administration had a strong role in the concrete definition and framing of the project or more abstractly, in the definition of its rationalities (cf. Leino 2006, Flyvbjerg 1998). The difference between the project administration and the participants in the project was that the administration concentrated on the development of participation, whereas the local residents emphasised the concrete local issues and were relatively unaware of the idea of modelling participation. This issue is treated more extensively in Chapter 7.2, where it will also be considered in relation to the broader literature on democratic innovations.

Earlier literature has emphasised the hybrid forms that current governance arrangements take, combining elements of networks, hierarchy and the market (Skelcher et al. 2013, cf. Ahonen 2013). The roles of the various actors in the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project are similar to the picture presented by Skelcher et al. (2013, 22) as a synthesis of the existing literature on New Public Management, network governance, participatory and deliberative democracy and urban politics (see also Chapter 2). As was noted, the authors portray the change as follows: elected politicians are reoriented as strategic decision makers and metagovernors who nevertheless cultivate direct contacts with citizens; public administrators are redefined as managers; and citizens, in their turn, are defined by Republican ideas of active citizenship.

Similarly, according to Pinson (2009), the growing projectification of urban policy leads to the strengthening of high-level municipal officials and the weakening of municipal councils. Projects tend to favour forms of action that are incompatible with the working logic of municipal councils, based on adversarial and majoritarian forms of democracy, since projects emphasise a deliberative logic and the importance of consensus and common visions. The legitimacy of urban leaders is more and more based on their capacity to steer urban coalitions rather than on an electoral basis. From the perspective of citizen participation, Pinson emphasises the selective character of urban projects which favour consensual modes of participation and those groups that have access to resources. (ibid.)

In relating the findings of this study to the existing literature, two things are central. First, in the Citizen Channel project, citizen participation was mainly targeted towards non-elected municipal officials, not towards elected politicians, even if the original aim of the project was to involve both groups. However, the activation of elected municipal politicians in a project like Citizen Channel was difficult and the Finnish culture of strong non-elected municipal officials (according to the interviews, especially prominent in Helsinki) was seen to militate against it. This finding is in conformity with the literature on “governance-driven democratisation” and the participatory literature that emphasises that a large proportion of participatory developments do occur in the field of policy rather than politics and that non-elected public officials play a significant role in them (Warren 2009; see also Chapter 2.3). Second, besides the municipal officials, the (more or less absent) local politicians and the active citizens, there was also a fourth, important actor, the NGO Helka or more broadly, the wider Citizen Channel project administration. It can be stated that Helka and the project administration acted as an intermediary organisation between the other groups. This finding will be analysed more in detail in Chapter 7.1.

The entity formed by the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project gives a more nuanced picture than that evoked by the ideals of strategic or programme steering in which strategies and/or programmes are supposed to set the framework for individual projects (see Chapter 2.4). As was noted, the strategic priorities at programme level, drawn from the visions and strategies for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, were at the project level only seen as a rhetorical framework to which lip service had to be paid during the application phase. Similarly, earlier political science literature has emphasised the role of projects as garbage cans (Forssell et al. 2013) – thereby conveying the relatively loose, complex and even arbitrary entities that they form. From the perspective of metagovernance, this weak linkage of projects to the actual existing strategies can pose a problem, especially in a situation where the role of democratically elected politicians is delimited to strategic steering. At the same time, the relatively loose framework and shifting priorities of the Citizen Channel project challenge the idea of the “hyper-rationality” (e.g. Sjöblom et al. 2013, 3) of projects as presented in the project management literature.

Both the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project are nonetheless compatible with the literature on the more tacit results of public sector programmes and projects such as the creation of networks and collaboration, the mobilisation of new actors (as in the case of Helka), the opportunity to try and test new things, and the symbolic importance of common programmes and projects (e.g. Jensen et al. 2007, Pinson 2009, see also Chapter 2.4). The project literature emphasises the innovative elements of projects (e.g. Sjöblom 2006a, Jensen et al. 2007, Sjöblom et al. forthcoming) and is often based on the assumption that new ideas and innovations come from below (Sulkunen 2006, 27). From that perspective, broad room for manoeuvre for an individual project can be a good thing. According to Pinson (2009, 313), because urban policies are based on projects and multi-actor networks, their results derive in part from coincidental elements. However, he states that this can paradoxically lead to positive results, as the coincidental nature of projects gives the actors involved greater opportunities to influence their outcomes.

In Citizen Channel, the discourse on urban competitiveness was redefined so that it helped the aims of the project to concentrate on citizen participation. This can be interpreted in two ways. It can be said that the logic of urban competitiveness encompasses the issue of citizen participation, which must be framed in terms of competitiveness in order to be included in the urban policy framework. However, the ways in which the concept was reinterpreted shows a certain amount of “wriggle room” at the project level. As was noted in Chapter 2.3, the literature on governance and democracy includes a discussion on the politicisation of the policy level, where the high-level political objectives are contested and redefined (e.g. Hajer & Wagenaar 2003b, Häikiö & Leino 2014b). Similarly according to Barnes and Prior (2009), the implementation of public services often includes subversion of high-level political objectives, which are contested, ignored or redefined at the policy level. The super discourse of urban competitiveness in particular is in earlier literature seen as providing a relatively loose and vague framework which allows for multiple interpretations (Buck et al. 2005, Tolkki et al. 2011, see also Chapter 2.5).

In earlier governance literature Skelcher et al. (2013, see also Skelcher 2007) are sceptical about generalising governance transitions and state that context matters. With the Urban Programme and Citizen Channel project, this means – besides the general Finnish administrative context – the current “participatory turn” of public policies and the specific framework of the governance of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, which was during the Urban Programme (and still is at the current moment) in a transitional phase, possibly towards more institutionalised forms of metropolitan governance. In the next chapter, both the more general “participatory turn” in public administration and the problems and development needs related to it will be considered in more detail, along with as the issue of metropolitan participation in the Helsinki Region.

6 DEVELOPING METROPOLITAN PARTICIPATION

The Citizen Channel project can be situated within two broader frameworks: first, the general “participatory turn” and development of participation in public policy; and second, the specific issue of participation as an aspect of the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region. This chapter will concentrate on these two themes. We will first look at how those working in the frontline of developing municipal participation see the issue of citizen participation, its problems and its development needs, before moving on to focus on the special field of metropolitan participation that transcends municipal boundaries.

6.1 ASPECTS OF THE “PARTICIPATORY TURN”

The social science literature has emphasised the growing use of a discourse and actual initiatives on citizen participation in public policy since the 1990s (see Chapter 2.3). In the interviews, one of the central themes was the development of participation and the challenges related to it, especially in municipalities. Many of the interviewees had a long personal experience of participatory projects and initiatives, but from a variety of perspectives: as state-level or municipal officials and planners; as neighbourhood-level or associations activists; or as researchers. The broader project administration of the Citizen Channel project including the steering group and, to some extent, the management group of the project could be described as “professionals in participation” (Nonjon 2005, 2012), working in the frontline of developing citizen participation at the local level. The aim of this subchapter is to analyse how these actors saw the current issues in the field of participation and its development.

6.1.1 FRAMING PARTICIPATION: LOCAL DEMOCRACY, KNOWLEDGE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

As was noted in Chapter 2, there are several forms of reasoning behind the development of participation both as a general phenomenon and more specifically, as a part of urban governance. In this study, three themes were especially prominent when interviewees were talking about citizen and resident participation. These were, first, issues of local democracy; second, the local knowledge and “good ideas” provided by the citizens; and third, the development of public administration and the quality of decision-making.

First, citizen participation and more precisely, resident participation as a part of urban and metropolitan governance, was seen as important from a

democratic perspective. Here, elements of participatory democracy were mentioned. These included, most importantly, opportunities for citizens to influence public administration and, to a lesser extent, the possibility of direct decision-making through (for instance) institutions of neighbourhood governance (cf. Chapter 2.3). In general, participation was in many interviews seen as a democratic issue much in the sense set out in article 27 of the current Municipal Act, which enumerates various forms of participation and influence that can be used in a municipality. However, most interviewees wanted greater involvement for direct forms of citizen participation across a variety of policy fields.

The democratic qualities of direct resident participation were primarily seen as a way to enhance local, sub-municipal democracy (in Finnish, often referred to as *lähidemokratia*, “near democracy”). This relates to the role that neighbourhood associations have traditionally played in Finnish municipalities. For instance Nousiainen (1998, 336) sees Finnish neighbourhood associations as a form of “near democracy” (defined as opportunities for citizens to influence administrative activities that affect their everyday lives), even constituting an “unofficial neighbourhood administration” emanating from citizens’ own actions. In the interviews, local participation was nevertheless seen both as direct and as association-based.

Especially in some of the interviews with the neighbourhood association activists, resident participation was presented as the voice of “little people” against “big politics”. However, even some of the representatives of the project administration saw themselves as voicing the views of the grassroots level against the system. In the following citation, the “little people’s issues” were mainly seen as local and neighbourhood-level issues and the organisation of local public services. More specifically, resident participation in metropolitan governance was in some interviews framed as representing local democracy or the grassroots level and was contrasted with the decision-making that was taking place at a high level, far away from residents (this issue will be more thoroughly presented in the next subchapter).

People complain why it is like this and why it is like that. Instead of complaining they could make initiatives and see that these [initiatives] somehow get through, they could participate more. Then, in my opinion, we could get more of these little people’s issues visible in big politics, so to speak.

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

Generally, many interviewees were using notions which can be related to the idea of active citizenship, strongly present in the field of projects and in the “participatory turn” of public policy (Sulkunen 2006, Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, Eriksson & Vogt 2013, Barnes et al. 2007). A concrete example of this in earlier literature has been the role of neighbourhood association activists (Staffans 2002, 2004, van de Wijdeven & Hendriks 2009), which was also

evident in the interviews among the participants in the Citizen Channel project (see Chapter 5.3). In the interviews, the idea of active citizenship was often related to the potential, knowledge and competence that the residents possess, as in the theory of participatory democracy (see Chapter 2.3). It was also seen as a logical sequel of rising levels of education, the individualisation of participation and the development of information and communication technology (cf. Sjöblom 2006b, 243–244, Eriksson & Vogt 2013). The role of the citizen in relation to the administration was seen some interviews to be changing from an administrative subject towards a more active actor.

Meanwhile, in some of the interviews with the project administration, the idea of active citizenship was interlaced with a Republican idea of responsabilisation (Barnes et al. 2007, Skelcher et al. 2013, 22), emphasising the duties of the citizens towards society. This was often related to a broader communitarian framework and contrasted with the individualising tendencies of participation (cf. Barber 1984, Putnam 1993, 2000). In the interviews, there were several references to “community” and “communality” and the supposed lack of them in modern society. However, other interviewees saw elements of new forms of communality for instance among the younger generations and in the new Internet-based forms of action. Recently, the idea of communitarianism, active citizenship and “taking the future in our own hands with a little help from our peers” has even found expression in Helka’s own publications (Tulikukka 2012, 87).

There is so much potential, people have potential. It is extremely important to realise it so that a person is not only thought of as a target.

Project administration, NGO or other association

I was interested more generally in this (...) how people take responsibility for their environment at the individual level and why nobody cares about anything that happens in the neighbourhood, more that way. (...) In a way, taking responsibility and fulfilling the civic duties of an individual.

Project administration, NGO or other association

As was seen in Chapter 5, the interviewees from the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project also framed participation from an economic perspective. Similarly, in earlier literature, urban and regional policies have been based on the idea of competitiveness as the most important objective of policy and the “New Conventional Wisdom” of these policies presupposes an interaction between the objectives of competitiveness, social cohesion and participation (Buck et al. 2005, Kuokkanen 2005, Moisio 2012, see also Chapter 2.5). As was noted, the interviewees echoed the ideas of Richard Florida (2004) on the role of the “creative class” in urban development and the literature on social capital and social cohesion (Putnam 1993, 2000, Buck et

al. 2005) on the impact of participation on economic performance. However, the issue of participation was in some interviews dismissed as “soft fluff” in contrast with the “hard” targets relating to the economy and competitiveness.

It can be stated that the framework of competitiveness is actually driving the way in which participation has to be presented in urban policies, in a manner similar to that presented by Brunila (2009) in her analysis of the discursive framework of gender equality projects. However, in the interviews, it was clear that despite the competitiveness-oriented framework of the Urban Programme, citizen participation was still seen in practice as an important thing in itself and that the framework of competitiveness was not central to the way in which the interviewees talked about participation – regardless of their position in the governance networks of the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project. Several interviewees wanted to distance themselves from the logic of competitiveness and saw participation as having a value independent of the economic framework, as an issue of democracy. This theme was clearly present in the interviews with the “professionals in participation” working in the project administration and with the participants in the Citizen Channel project. However, even those actors from the Urban Programme management group who in other interviews were seen as promoting the competitiveness-oriented agenda of the programme framed the issue of participation primarily in other than economic terms, as the following citation shows.

If you reduce it to that [to the relation between competitiveness and participation], citizen involvement is an essential part of cohesion. But in a way it is a wider, horizontal issue that relates to the whole credibility of our society. The question of democracy is the bedrock and a grounding value.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

Besides the demands for democratic participation, the interviews – especially those with the Citizen Channel project administration – often brought up the local and experiential knowledge that citizens possessed both as residents of given neighbourhoods and as users of public services, knowledge much referred to in the planning and governance literatures (see Chapters 2.3 and 2.5). Geographically, this local knowledge was primarily seen as emanating from the neighbourhood level, whereas the larger municipality was mainly seen as the domain of the institutions of representative democracy. In the interviews, the metropolitan level as a whole was not mentioned as a unit of which the citizens could have “local” knowledge. However, their local, experience-based knowledge of the border areas of the municipalities was one of the main issues in Citizen Channel. In the interviews, the role of the residents as service users was closely bound up with their local knowledge of neighbourhoods, as the importance of *local services* was often emphasised in the interviews. This finding was in keeping with the role that residents played

in the Citizen Channel project (see Chapter 5.3), where the concrete local issues and the role of active citizens were emphasised.

At the same, residents' knowledge about services was sometimes related in the interviews to a more general development and co-production of services and innovations, reflected in the international governance literature (e.g. Moore & Hartley 2010, Sørensen 2012, Fledderus et al. 2014). This was clearly present in the rhetoric of the later Urban Programme 2008–2010 (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiohjelma 2008–2010). Several interviewees emphasised the role of participation in creating “new things” or “innovations”. Interviewees especially from the state administration (but also to some extent from the municipal) saw parallels between the development of citizen participation and “user-driven” solutions, or they spoke of citizens as “end-users” of policies. From that perspective, participation was closely connected to the notion of “user-drivenness” that has characterised recent municipal development in Finland (Jäppinen 2011). A similar framework is present in many EU-funded projects implemented in Finnish cities (Kuokkanen forthcoming a). Here, citizens' knowledge was less strongly tied to “near democracy” and local knowledge of the neighbourhood, and it was rather seen as one of many inputs in the development of innovations. In the following interview extracts, the first is a more typical example of “local knowledge” as something represented by the residents. Meanwhile, as the second interview extract shows, participatory methods are viewed in service innovation as one input among several.

The residents, of course, they know the area best, and the reality in which people live.

Project administration, NGO or other association

I have myself discussed here [in the municipal administration] in quite a few meetings the development of service innovations through participatory methods. We can talk about any service, whether it is from the social department, transport, any kind of development. At the same time, service innovations can be produced in the same arena by the municipality or there can be companies involved.

Project administration, municipality

In earlier literature, the development of participation has been related to the development and modernisation of public administration (Cochrane 2007, Nonjon 2005, 2012, Barnes et al. 2007, Kuokkanen forthcoming a). In this literature, the main drivers for the “participatory turn” of public administration come mainly from the administration itself, and some of the earlier studies have emphasised the relatively limited role that it allows for participation (Nonjon 2005, 2012). The modernisation and development of administration was a theme that was also present in the interviews. This stemmed in part from the framework of knowledge presented above, as the

residents' knowledge of their neighbourhoods and local public services and more generally as a driver of innovation was related to the quality of public administration.

Similarly, some interviewees saw the new tools for information, citizen participation and feedback as a way to enhance the openness and transparency of public administration. This rhetoric is present in Finnish policy documents concerning the development of participation (Oikeusministeriö 2014). From this perspective, collecting feedback and disseminating information are one way to see the issue of transparency. Meanwhile, Tero Erkkilä (2010) has stated that the issue of transparency is strongly in evidence in the current Finnish New Public Management-oriented political discourse and policy initiatives and has been partly reframed in them to fit NPM-oriented thinking.

These things have an effect on how we understand openness; this is related to the openness and transparency of the public administration. And through it participation becomes concrete too, we [municipal administration] get information and we can then react to it and comment on it.

Project administration, municipality

The way in which the interviewees presented and framed the issue of participation is consistent with the broader literature on the development of participation (see Chapter 2.3) and with earlier Finnish studies on the field (Staffans 2004, Bäcklund 2007, Häikiö 2007, Luhtakallio 2010, 167). It is interesting that even though the Citizen Channel project had to use the discursive framework of economic competitiveness when applying for money from the Urban Programme, the interviewees overwhelmingly framed the issue of participation from other perspectives, related primarily to local or “near” democracy and the knowledge and potential possessed by citizens/residents, but also extending to the effective functioning of public administration.

These three central elements of the way in which resident participation was presented in the interviews were also closely interrelated. According to this logic, local knowledge was simultaneously an issue of local democracy and a way to enhance the quality of decision-making by soliciting residents' perspectives (see also Staffans 2004, Bäcklund 2007). This was evident in the following citation.

I see the whole idea of participation as being to broaden our understanding of society. We need citizen participation so that we can get a mirror and feedback on how the administration is functioning, whether services work adequately, what kind of living environment we are creating. And the broader the circle of participants the more this understanding grows.

Project administration, municipality

However, the interview data showed that there were different interpretations, especially of the relationship between democracy and local knowledge; and that this relationship was not always simple. For some interviewees, the voices of residents were seen as “good ideas” that the administration can use if they are good and useful enough, while others saw residents’ participation as representing local and grassroots level democracy from a more normative perspective. Interestingly, these views were not directly related to the background of the actors. The relationship between democracy and local knowledge was partly related to the issue of representativeness, which was seen as problematic in the context of neighbourhood associations and/or active inhabitants, as they represent only a small percentage of the local population. In the earlier literature, Staffans (2004) does not consider the representativeness of resident associations as a problem as she sees their role in providing expertise and local knowledge as a way to overcome the issue of representativeness. This kind of reflection was also present in the interviews.

At the same time, the representative institutions of municipal democracy were seen as the ultimate democratic institutions which could compensate for the bias in the representativeness of direct participation. However, even those interviewees who emphasised the supremacy of elected institutions stressed the importance of consulting residents during the preparation of policy, but in such a way that accorded actual decision-making to elected institutions. In a similar vein, the role of non-elected municipal administration was seen as a way to take into account the issues of representativeness and equity. Here, the role of urban planners in the planning process earned particular mention.

These different forms of participation have to be used in a sensible way. It's best to start from the view that the decision-making machinery is political and these are channels through which it is possible to get good ideas.

Project administration, NGO or other association

In existing research, network-based and collaborative forms of governance are closely interconnected with the “participatory turn” of public administration (see Chapter 2). According to this study, participation is framed in the municipal context mainly from the perspectives of local democracy, local knowledge and the development of public administration. Similar themes have been present with various nuances in the earlier Finnish literature on the topic (see Staffans 2004, Bäcklund 2007, Häikiö 2007, Luhtakallio 2010, 167). In my study, the competitiveness-oriented framework of the Urban Programme – which influenced the way in which the Citizen Channel project had to be presented during the application phase – was not important to the way in which the interviewees talked about the issue of participation. Here, references to local democracy and some of the ways in which the interviewees talked about local knowledge stem from a much older democratic framework than the governance discussion that arose in the 1990s. At the same time,

references to service innovations, end-users, user-driven solutions and so on can be seen as reflecting the governance framework and its emphasis on knowledge production and the co-production of services.

However, although the interviewees framed participation mainly from the perspectives of local or “near” democracy, local knowledge and the development of public administration, the most important element of the Citizen Channel project was the way in which the issue of participation became a *development object* and how this connected with the actual role of the participants in the project and the local issues they were promoting. I argue that this is a theme that is present in many development-oriented participatory projects (for an overview of EU-funded projects, see Kuokkanen forthcoming a) and is still an under-researched topic. I will come back to this theme in Chapter 7, while the next subchapter concentrates on the controversies and challenges associated with resident participation.

6.1.2 CONTROVERSIES AND CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH PARTICIPATION

The interviewees mentioned several challenges and controversies related to citizen participation and its development in municipalities in particular. In the interviews, the first and most commonly named problem concerned the effectiveness and impact of participation: although the issue of participation had been on the political agenda recently, the various initiatives introduced by public authorities seldom led to concrete results. Many of the participatory schemes were seen as ineffective, even as a form of symbolic participation (cf. Arnstein 1969). The interviewees felt that many of the participatory devices only focused on discussion and had no or only a weak connection to actual decision-making (see also Chapter 2.3). According to the interviews with the Citizen Channel project administration, these forms of participation were seen among the resident activists as “making them play” (*leikittäminen*) – an expression that was used in several interviews. This had the consequence of reducing residents’ motivation to participate. Even many of the street-level municipal officials working with the issue of participation in their everyday work were fairly sceptical about the organisation of participatory initiatives in practice, as the following citation from such an official shows.

The city should give residents the opportunity to participate so that they feel that participation is effective and important, and not just giving residents crumbs from the table. For instance the local committees are discussion clubs that have no chance of influencing things. The resident associations know the circumstances in their neighbourhoods and how they should be developed. Yet they are not used as experts – at any rate they are not listened to. If their opinions are sometimes asked, they have no influence.

Project administration, municipality

One reason for the low effectiveness and impact of participation mentioned in the interviews was the low level of resources targeted towards issues of participation inside the public administration. According to the interviews, municipalities rarely had an official who was explicitly responsible for direct resident participation as a distinct policy field; the field of participation was dispersed across a number of administrative policy sectors (see also Bäcklund 2007). Even though the views of residents were gathered in various ways, it was unclear how the process would be followed up in the public administration. Despite the criticism from the interviewees, it must be noted that there is nevertheless a group of municipal officials which is working on issues of participation, often in connection with their other duties. Many of the municipal officials who were involved in Citizen Channel (and to a lesser extent, in the Urban Programme management group) were actually those who were working on participation in their own municipalities. However, some of these said that participation is something that has come up as a new issue on top of their usual work and that they have difficulties finding time for it.

And of course, when participation is based on associations, it's challenging to find resources, and [it is] time-consuming work. For both sides. All this has come on top of the so-called normal work. (...) This doesn't mean that there isn't good will, but is there enough time and resources?

Urban Programme management group, municipality

Many interviewees representing the project administration, neighbourhood association activists and, in some cases, even the Urban Programme management group mentioned an express unwillingness on the part of public administrators and elected politicians to commit to the development of participation; some stated that municipal officials considered the issue of participation to be of secondary importance (see e.g. Klijn & Koppenjan 2000, Åström & Granberg 2007). Even though some of this criticism came from NGOs and resident activists, interestingly, many of the critical voices were those of street-level municipal officials working with issues of participation in their everyday work.

Finnish administrative culture was seen as leading to a strong role for non-elected upper-level municipal officials and as being problematic from the perspective of citizen involvement. Some interviewees saw the position of municipal officials as a legacy of Tsarist times, with a powerful role for non-elected public officials combined with a view of citizens as administrative subjects (see also Nousiainen 1998, 337) and emphasised that this administrative culture did not allow for real listening and deliberation. However, they saw differences between the administrative cultures of the various municipalities. In some interviews – especially with those from the project administration – Helsinki was singled out as having a particularly powerful role for non-elected municipal officials, compared with the other

cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (this discussion will be treated more in detail in Chapter 6.2).

This theme of participation, resident participation and local governance, it's quite a taboo in Helsinki. They already tried these models of neighbourhood governance back in the 1980s and somebody has just used a red pencil there (...), that we don't do this, we just can't do this or we don't want to. (...) It's such a tough hierarchical command system. (...) They can't share their power and test how it might work.

Project administration, NGO or other association

Another, related challenge concerned the complex relationship between the institutions of representative democracy, the functioning of the municipal administration and demands for direct participation. Interviewees including upper-level and street-level municipal officials as well as NGO representatives emphasised that direct forms of resident participation had to be incorporated into the existing institutions. This, however, could cause clashes between the models of representative and participatory democracy (see also Chapter 2.3). The fact that Finnish administrative culture is strongly based on law and administrative praxis was seen as a difficult framework for participatory initiatives and projects where the role of participation itself was only very vaguely prescribed. In some interviews, the legally regulated planning process (more precisely, the Land Use and Planning Act of 2000) was seen to have created more formal models and channels for citizen participation, compared to other forms of local participation. In general in the interviews, the “participatory turn” in public administration was seen as a phenomenon that was still searching for forms to take and channels to adopt and there were no clear norms or practices on how participation should be organised.

Traditionally, participation must leave some kind of trace, mustn't it? We have had quite a strong legal [framework], where administration is based on law and administrative practice. So all these elements have to fit into the existing system. As we build our new working model, we still need to figure out how it will end up.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

The legislation concerning participation is so vague outside planning that it helps to cause all this confusion. (...) The relationship between direct participation and democracy is problematic, what's acceptable and what isn't and what ways are there to participate that are natural to people. The fact is that administrative structures probably can't be changed much, so participation must in a way be incorporated into the existing administrative structure and then it may not support the way in which people would like to participate.

Project administration, NGO or other association

One set of challenges concerned the various and partly contradictory forms that citizen and resident participation can take, which also affects the way in which participation is developed. In the interviews, a number of controversies were mentioned. A broad group of problems or challenges concerned the relationship between the development of representative or collective institutions versus the development of direct and individual forms of participation. This was seen in the interviews from various perspectives. The first was the relationship between the development of voting and representative institutions in relation to direct (either individual or association-based) participation. In some interviews, state-led participatory initiatives in particular were seen as concentrating on safeguarding representative democracy and voting (see also Keränen 2007), whereas municipal initiatives were seen as concentrating on participation by residents or their associations.

Second, the interviewees contrasted direct forms of participation with semi-representative participatory structures. In the context of municipal participation, this meant first and foremost the institutions of neighbourhood governance, especially the existing local committees (*aluetoimikunta/alueneuvottelukunta*) consisting of one or more neighbourhoods, which were supposed to represent residents' views in the municipal administration. At the time of the study, these committees existed in Vantaa and Espoo in slightly differing forms (neither of them was directly elected), while the model has not been on the political agenda in Helsinki since pilot work back in the 1980s (see Bäcklund 2007). The model was abolished in Espoo in 2009 when the city moved towards looser forms of local forums instead, whereas Vantaa has continued with this model.

In some of the interviews, local committees were seen as ambiguous from the perspective of the representative-participatory divide. Especially in Vantaa, besides representing residents and neighbourhoods, these committees had a party political nature which further complicated matters. Some of the interviewees saw these structures as in principle democratic, but as leading to relatively limited, bureaucratic or non-innovative forms of participation. In general, the interviewees were divided on the issue of established neighbourhood-level or broader sub-municipal committees or councils. In particular, those neighbourhood association activists who were themselves involved in local committees saw them as a channel for advocacy on issues affecting their neighbourhoods vis-à-vis the administration. Moreover, as will be noted in Chapter 6.2, several interviewees had positive opinions about the establishment of neighbourhood-level decision-making structures in a situation of greater institutionalised metropolitan governance.

The interviewees also contrasted the role of associations with those of individual forms of participation (cf. Sintomer & de Maillard 2007). In the context of municipal participation, associations meant above all neighbourhood associations. As was noted in Chapter 3.1, Finland has a strong tradition of registered associations. In cities, neighbourhood associations have

in particular been perceived in the existing literature as important channels for local participation (e.g. Nousiainen 1998, 336). However, the field has been undergoing a period of change and the Internet in particular has given rise to new opportunities for individual forms of participation.

As the Citizen Channel project was based on a strong role for neighbourhood associations and their umbrella association Helka, this was in some interviews seen as the reason why this model of participation was emphasised in the project. However, this seems not to be peculiar to this case. For instance Luhtakallio (2010, 11) describes an event on local democracy where Helka, with other associations, represented the grassroots or residents' views in Helsinki, while a French group from Lyon and its surroundings included individuals presenting themselves as "citizens and only citizens". In many of my interviews Helka was seen as acting in general as a major channel for resident participation in Helsinki, distinguishing it from the neighbouring municipalities of Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen. However, as will be analysed later in this subchapter, several interviewees saw also problems in the representativeness of neighbourhood associations as "voices" of their neighbourhoods, as they were seen to favour limited or elitist forms of participation.

Finally, a few interviewees saw conflicts between the individualisation of participation and current demands for communality, both present as broad trends behind the current "participatory turn" (see e.g. Sjöblom 2006b, Barnes et al. 2007, Eriksson & Vogt 2013). This was especially evident with those interviewees who spoke about the development of participation from a communitarian or Republican perspective and emphasised the role of local communities, civic duties or responsible citizens.

In the following citation, the various forms that (the development of) citizen participation could take were seen as an issue in the Citizen Channel project that was never fully addressed or opened up during the project. In particular, the relationship between representative, association-based and direct forms of participation was seen as fundamentally problematic. As was noted above, because of the strong role of Helka and neighbourhood associations, a model of participation based on neighbourhood associations was perceived as being the most prominent in the project. This is reflected in the following citation.

There are always controversies in these projects, and there were also inside the steering group different opinions about what we are really pursuing. These principal questions about [the relationship] between direct participation and representative participation and the role of associations, they were always present there. And in my opinion, they couldn't be totally unravelled and [the steering group] couldn't decide and make choices. In a way, the role of associations was really strong there.

Project administration, municipality

In the development of participation, a distinct set of challenges concerned the relationship between the “invited forms” of participation developed by the public administration and the free mobilisation of citizens. Several interviewees saw that the development of participation on the part of public authorities and the free forms of participation on the part of the citizens stemmed from different logics and it was often difficult to combine the two – a view expressed by association activists and high-level municipal officials responsible for the development of participation alike. This finding echoes the previous literature on the development of democratic innovations as one of the crucial dilemmas in the development of participation (Blaug 2000, see also Chapter 2.3). In the interviews, the use of Internet-based forms of participation and mobilisation was seen as contributing to this phenomenon. From the point of view of municipalities, this presents challenges in the ways in which they try to create channels for citizen participation. For instance, some of the interviewees mentioned the development of interactive Internet sites which had been used relatively little by residents of the municipality, even though they actively discussed local issues on other sites such as the website of the local newspaper.

However, the interviewees had a relatively positive view of the potential of the various grassroots initiatives if the municipal administration could only learn how to make use of them. The interviewees regularly mentioned the role of certain NGOs and think tanks in promoting innovative and creative solutions. After my interviews (conducted in 2008 and in early 2009), this kind of development has actually been gathering momentum in Helsinki and other Finnish municipalities through the existence of work of development actors and local activists, loose networks of citizens, Facebook groups and other actors, who have developed local activities from neighbourhood-level flea markets to festivals and community gardening, created networks and provided alternative solutions in the urban planning process (e.g. Hernberg 2012, Tulikukka 2012, Alatalo 2015, Mäenpää & Faehnle 2015, Willman 2015). It remains a challenge for the administration to combine the more top-down forms of “invited participation” with the more bottom-up forms of action coming from the citizens.

All these new tools, they create lots of opportunities for us, [participation] could be done in new ways and with new things, so in my opinion we are in a kind of transition in these things and there will probably be new forms of involvement. And thinking mustn't be official-driven, but freer and more creative and things must be born out of other perspectives than these organisational ones.

Project administration, municipality

Finally, one controversy concerned the way in which demands and ideas originating from citizens should be viewed in the public administration. This related in part to the various ways in which the interviewees saw the role of

residents from the perspective of local democracy and local knowledge (see also Bäcklund 2007). As was noted above, there were diverging views on whether the objective of direct citizen and resident participation was to get “good ideas” for decision-making or to promote local democracy on a broader scale. Other allied controversies concerned which phase of the decision-making process was most suitable for participation and how well formulated the demands and plans coming from citizens should be.

If the criticism and controversies presented above mainly concentrated on how the public administration should organise participation, distinct critiques concerned the residents’ or citizens’ role in the participatory process. These came from various backgrounds and concentrated on the representativeness, competence and motivation of the residents participating. Such arguments have been present in the “pessimistic” literature on governance and democratic innovations, and they are recognised as the main challenges for the participatory model of democracy (Amnå 2003, 116–120, see also Gilljam 2003, Chapter 2.3).

The first point of view concerned the representativeness of the participating actors, often present in the existing research on participation, governance and projects as well as in political reports on the topic (see Chapters 2.3 and 3.1). Several interviewees emphasised the elitist nature of participation. As the interviews mainly concerned municipal participation, the interviewees often made particular mention of the activity of neighbourhood or resident associations, which usually consist of relatively small groups of residents in a given neighbourhood. As was noted above, the representativeness of resident associations was nevertheless contrasted with their role as providers of local knowledge, which was in some interviews seen as outweighing the issue of representativeness.

In some of the interviews, the emphasis on active citizenship and the way in which the existing channels of participation were organised could also more broadly be seen as benefiting well-off, educated citizens with resources (cf. Chapter 2.3). At the same time, significant groups of people, including the growing numbers of immigrants, were seen as remaining outside the existing channels of participation. This theme was nevertheless quite seldom present in the interviews with those actors who were working with the development of participation. As was noted in Chapter 5.3, Citizen Channel was not an “Empowerment Project” (Eliasoph 2011) of the kind typical of social urban policy, aimed at empowering vulnerable groups. Consequently, this issue was little evident in the interviews. However, the representatives from Helka did mention their cooperation with social services that were working closely with under-represented groups. In any case, the issue of integrating immigrants was present in another project funded by the Urban Programme 2005–2007. In the interviews, some of the librarians in particular who met with the various groups involved in their neighbourhoods in their everyday work saw the development of participation and the demands for active citizenship as problematic from the perspective of vulnerable groups.

I don't see that [the interaction between citizens and municipal officials] as being a problem for the educated population. (...) If you are active and have a good educational background, it's certainly possible to have an influence. But then the problem is, in my opinion, that we have lots of immigrants and excluded people, so their channels of influence, they don't have the capacity to use these channels.

Project participant, librarian

If the first form of criticism concerned the representativeness of the residents or citizens, the second form focused on their competence – a common critique used in elitist democratic theory as an argument for the primacy of representative institutions (Schumpeter 1956, see also Amnå 2003, 117, Gilljam 2003, 186–188). This form of reasoning is also commonly present in the planning discussion, in that context often framed as the NIMBY (“not in my backyard”) syndrome (Sintomer & de Maillard 2007, Papadopoulos & Warin 2007, Niemenmaa 2005).

In the interviews, this form of critique addressed the capacity of residents to deal with broad, city-wide issues beyond their own neighbourhoods, their understanding of the economic realities of the cities, and their ability to perceive long-term developments instead of short-term, concrete action (for similar findings from the French urban policy, see Sintomer & de Maillard 2007). Similarly, some interviewees questioned the capacity of residents to generate proactive propositions in the early phases of policy preparation rather than adopt a reactive attitude when the decision-making process had already reached its latter phases. The problem of individual agendas versus the common good was also related to this form of criticism (see also Amnå 2003, 117–118, Häikiö 2007, Eranti 2014). Finally, some interviewees saw that residents often have greater expectations of the impact of their participation than can be met in the existing system.

It's easiest for people to take a stand on concrete issues. And when there's discussion about these metropolitan issues, so these neighbourhood associations – especially in Helsinki, the neighbourhood associations are quite a strong thing, but then, are there such people who can take a stance on broader issues and perceive the nuances or have they already been co-opted into this machinery of positions of trust?

Project administration, NGO or other association

Many [resident] activists pursue their own agenda more than [the general interest] and it's a bit problematic. They could understand that the way in which they want to influence things is not the way in which everyone in the world would like to do it.

Project administration, municipality

Finally, one set of problems related to the low participation rate and problems with time use and motivation among residents. In his analysis of the possibilities of participatory democracy, Amnå (2003, 118–119; cf. Gilljam 2003, 189–193) calls this the “want/ have time problem” and does not see it primarily as a motivational problem at the individual level or as an issue that can be solved simply by new forms of political steering. Instead, he states that the framework of “everyday life” – including division of labour, housing, use of time – should be radically reformed if the aim is to create broad and representative forms of participation.

In the interviews, the low rate of participation was quite often mentioned, especially by municipal officials who worked with the issue of participation. Some interviewees related it to the Finnish participatory culture, while others emphasised problems in the way in which participatory initiatives were organised in practice. According to the interviewees, non-elected municipal officials were prepared to organise interaction during their working hours, whereas citizens – and to some extent, some of those in elected positions of trust – were only able to participate in their free time. Bad experiences from ineffective participatory schemes (as the word *leikittäminen* or “making the inhabitants play” indicated) were according to the interviewees likely to reduce residents’ motivation. At the same time, the proliferation of participatory initiatives led to exhaustion and fatigue among residents, of a kind with the concept of “project fatigue” (Jensen et al. 2007, 17) in the project literature.

This citizen participation, it has actually been our biggest worry. I remember when we started [talks about an international conference of municipal officials]. People were really excitedly talking about how they had responded to the deluge of ideas that they had received from people. And here, you sort of uncork the champagne bottle and see what gushes out – there isn’t much.

Project administration, municipality

The interviewees saw citizen participation in general as being in a period of change. They made special mention of the ways in which the younger generation would like to participate and of the role of free forms of mobilisation and information and communication technology in them. At the same time, the interviewees saw a shift towards forms of commitment “lighter” than those traditionally undertaken by people involved in associations. They perceived traditional neighbourhood associations as being in a difficult situation, because they needed to attract younger people. A similar picture of ad hoc participation has been sketched by Bang & Sørensen (1999, 2001) in their study on the “Everyday Maker” or in the later typology of Dutch neighbourhood activists by van de Wijdeven and Hendriks (2009), reflected also in the Finnish research on changes in the field of associations, participation and activism (Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009, Stranius 2009).

According to the interviews, not just associations but voluntary work in general is facing a similar period of flux.

The division between the traditional neighbourhood associations and new kinds of Facebook- and event-based neighbourhood development groups has been analysed by the manager of Helka (Tulikukka 2012). As Tulikukka (2012, 85) puts it, “the older activist generation (60+) seems to have great challenges in implementing, or even understanding the new, less-hierarchical and more-flexible operating modes. In turn, the younger generations shun any kind of hierarchy and ‘just do it’”. Even though this kind of development has been intensifying since my field study was conducted in 2008–2009 – not least because of the local Facebook groups, events and networks referred to by Tulikukka as “town village movements” – there were indications that this was already happening in my data.

Some of the interviewees saw a rise in new, more flexible, short-term and Internet-based forms of activism and voluntary work – for instance, in the fields of sustainable development and societal issues – that differed from previous ones. However, not just young people but the growing number of retired baby-boomers could be deployed as a resource for voluntary work, as was suggested in some of the interviews. More recently, voluntary work has been a current topic in Finnish society, not least because of the wave of asylum seekers who have come to Finland (for an overview on the topic in the Finnish main newspaper Helsingin Sanomat, see Helsingin Sanomat: Vapaaehtoistyö).

It is a big challenge that we compete all the time for media space [and] people's time while entertainment attracts more than these societal and voluntary things. But then things just change form; in my opinion in these younger generations there is lots of voluntary spirit – sustainable development and societal thinking – it just changes its form and there are totally new ways of doing things. And these new forms of organisation come from the world of the Internet (...), this sort of random participation where individuals have to do what they want and participate when they want and not necessarily commit to extremely long life cycles.

Project administration, NGO or other association

According to my interviews with representatives of NGOs and high-level and street-level municipal officials, the emphasis in development work should be primarily on newer and Internet-based forms of participation rather than on traditional ones. A group whose participation should be encouraged – and which was also one target group in the Citizen Channel project – was children and young people (a point of view shared by the recent democracy policy programmes at the national level, too, see Chapter 3.1). However, some of the interviewees mentioned the existence of a “digital divide” between groups or a more general cleavage between well-educated, active citizens and vulnerable

groups. Because of this, many interviewees saw a need for a variety of channels and forms of participation, both Internet-based and face-to-face. The latter included easily accessible meeting points and open events for residents and public officials. Librarians were particularly active in presenting these propositions and saw libraries as useful meeting points. Some interviewees from the municipal administration also noted that face-to-face and Internet-based forms of participation and interaction were blending with each other, as when resident events were filmed and put on the Internet.

Although interviewees had differing opinions as to the suitable phase of the policy process for citizen participation to take place, in general, they wanted to develop the interface between citizens and municipal officials and politicians – to improve the opportunities for policy-makers to receive citizens' views and for citizens to provide the decision-making system with timely and proactive propositions. A fairly common proposition – especially among the project workers representing Helka who had themselves been in such a position in the Citizen Channel project – was to put in place local coordinators of some kind who could act as intermediaries between the demands of residents and the public administration or between the various projects and initiatives and the permanent administration. This model of local coordinators had been present among the “tools” of the Citizen Channel project but it had not been included in the final toolbox, which probably means that it did not receive unanimous support from the project's management group. The work of local coordinators usually related to relatively concrete issues in the neighbourhoods. Some of the interviewees nevertheless opted for more visionary forms of coordination for ideas originating from citizens directed towards the public administration.

One thing that should be reflected on and used more (...) [would be] a sort of sparring system for the council and upper-level officials where we would really have tools and a reaction where the residents would be like, “Now I feel that this could be interesting”, so that there would be somebody who would come and collect ideas on these issues and pass them on to the highest level of decision-makers so that they would know. And vice versa, the highest leaders could say “This interests us, can you give us your views?”

Project administration, NGO or other association

A distinct group of reforms concerned changes in the societal culture around citizen participation and the inclusion of new forms of democracy. Some of the interviewees were proponents of direct democracy, while others emphasised more deliberative and discursive forms of democracy, which they saw as leading to better political results and new forms of knowledge and innovation, as in the general theory of deliberative democracy or in versions of “output-based democracy” (Fung & Wright 2003, Torfing & Triantafillou 2011; see also Chapter 2.3). From a different perspective, one of the high-level public officials from the Urban Programme management group saw the Finnish political

culture as being too consensual and wanted it to move in a more agonistic direction (Mouffe 1993, 2000, Hillier 2003); in other words, to allow a greater degree of conflict and provide arenas to manage it. This showed that many of the public officials and developers of participation were also following developments in current democratic theory and were influenced by them.

At the same time, an important aspect of the “participatory turn” has concerned the policy level – the relationship between citizens and non-elected officials, with the institutions of representative democracy assuming a more peripheral position (see Chapter 2.3). Similarly, in the Citizen Channel project, the role of the elected officials remained relatively modest despite the original objectives of the project (see Chapter 5.2). Many of the interviewees nevertheless emphasised the need to develop interaction between citizens and elected politicians. In some of the interviews, the strong non-elected municipal officials were even seen as gatekeepers between citizens and politicians. As was noted above, although a powerful role for municipal officials was seen as a typical characteristic of Finnish political culture, this form of critique was applied most rigorously to Helsinki with the municipalities of Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen being seen as more accessible. At the same time, the development of direct forms of participation was seen as diminishing the power of elected politicians, especially when it was more than mere preparatory work and involved a real shift in power, as would be the case with establishing neighbourhood governance.

As we strengthen direct participation we must constantly be aware that we simultaneously diminish the power of persons in elected positions of trust. And because of this it is senseless not to involve them in this work.

Project administration, municipality

As has been noted in this subchapter, the interviewees presented a variety of logics, problems and development trajectories behind the “participatory turn” of public administration. However, the views, thoughts and opinions of the interviewees cannot be easily categorised according to the background of the actors. This was interesting in relation to the findings presented in Chapter 5, where it was noted that the priorities of the Urban Programme, the Citizen Channel project administration and the participants in the project differed from each other. As was stated there, the issue of participation was a secondary one in the Urban Programme, since the programme’s primary focus was on urban competitiveness and the creation of consensus between the municipalities involved; the Citizen Channel project administration emphasised the development of participation; while the participants in the project concentrated on concrete issues in their neighbourhoods. However, the way in which all the various actor groups talked about participation and its development as a general phenomenon was relatively similar regardless of their backgrounds.

A few distinctions could nevertheless be made. In general, high-level municipal officials were more closely aligned with the official line of the organisations they represented whereas the representatives of NGOs and street-level municipal officials in the steering group of the Citizen Channel project presented more critical opinions of the existing system (cf. the notion of “subversive citizens” as presented by Barnes & Prior 2009). Those actors who dealt with issues of participation in their everyday work – mainly the Citizen Channel project administration as broadly understood, both NGO and municipal representatives – naturally had more to say about the development of participation than the members of the Urban Programme management group or the participants in the project. This group of actors had the strongest tendency to think about participation in analytical terms or relate it to their previous experiences of participatory projects and initiatives. However, all the actor groups interviewed emphasised both the importance of and the challenges associated with the development of citizen participation. It must be noted that there was some fluidity and overlap in the status and roles of these actors. There were for instance members of the Urban Programme management group who were currently working or had earlier worked on issues of participation, resident activists involved in municipal politics, street-level municipal officials closely involved with Helka, and Citizen Channel project workers who had a background in municipal administration.

The interviews showed that the development of citizen and resident participation is a topical issue in public administration, but there are a number of interpretations of what participation is and various forms of logic behind the “participatory turn”. As was noted in the previous subchapter, participation was framed from the perspectives of local or “near” democracy, provision of knowledge and the development of public administration – themes also present with various nuances in the earlier Finnish literature on the topic (see Staffans 2004, Bäcklund 2007, Häikiö 2007, Luhtakallio 2010, 167). There are several challenges and controversies related to the development of participation which concern both the functioning of the municipal administration and the requirements for participating citizens. More generally, the heterogeneity of participation and demands around it make it difficult to develop uniform structures for participation. In general, citizen participation and its organisation in public administration are in a process of change, not least because of the development of information and communication technology – and the interviews included a very common discourse of change and “old” and “new” forms of participation. At the same time, one of the biggest issues in the “participatory turn” of the public administration is how invited forms of participation fit with the more bottom-up forms of citizen mobilisation.

In the municipal context, a central issue is the role of representative municipal democracy and its relationship with direct citizen participation. This was a theme that was present throughout the interviews. The interviewees saw the issue of citizen participation as a complement to the institutions of

representative municipal democracy, and the way in which participation would fit into the existing institutions of municipal democracy was present as a general theme in the interviews regardless of whether the interviewee came from a municipal or NGO background. In relation to the general theoretical framework of governance and democracy presented in Chapter 2.3, the findings presented in this subchapter show a rather pragmatic view of the development of participation and a relatively strong emphasis on existing institutions when compared with the more idealistic theories of participatory and deliberative democracy. Fairly similar findings have been made in the study by Luhtakallio (2011) of the Helsinki case. However, different participatory schemes in Finland seem to stem from backgrounds that themselves exhibit differences. The study by Marko Nousiainen (2011) on EU-funded rural LEADER projects in Finland showed that the discourse of the LEADER projects was based on a critique of representative democracy (*ibid.*, 56–61) and existing bureaucracy (*ibid.*, 87–93). These kinds of discourses did not emanate from my data in the way in which the interviewees talked about the development of participation. However, the latter discourse was, to some extent, present in the way in which the high-level officials talked about the Urban Programme or programme and project steering in general (see Chapter 5.1). As was noted in Chapter 5, institutions of representative democracy remained in practice quite aloof from both the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project.

Besides the general challenges around developing participation, one of the central findings in this study was that the context in which Citizen Channel was implemented was problematic, in that it concerned the development of a model of participation for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. In the next subchapter, we will be looking more closely at the specific framework of Citizen Channel project, i.e. at the development of metropolitan participation.

6.2 THE CASE OF METROPOLITAN PARTICIPATION

In the development of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region, the issue of democracy has been of secondary concern (Haila & Le Galès 2005, see also Chapter 3.2). Even though the issue of representative metropolitan democracy did, to some extent, enter the political agenda during the previous broad coalition government (or technically, two governments between 2011 and 2015), the issue of direct citizen participation in metropolitan governance has been more or less a non-issue. In that respect, the Citizen Channel project presented new openings, most centrally the “metropolitan dimension of everyday life”. However, from the perspective of the municipalities, the different administrative and, to some extent, even participatory cultures of the individual municipalities pose a problem in the development of metropolitan participation. These themes will be analysed in this subchapter.

6.2.1 PARTICIPATION AS A SECONDARY ISSUE IN METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE

As was noted in Chapter 2.5, new urban policies often include new levels of action such as the metropolitan level and the neighbourhood level (Atkinson 2007, see also Kuokkanen 2005). Especially in the Finnish context, the urban policies of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area have been strongly intertwined with the development of metropolitan collaboration for the area. My research process was situated in a period of transition in the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the Helsinki Region which is still ongoing. The Urban Programme was a relatively small-scale policy programme which included only the four municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and a relatively limited budget and set of policy issues – mainly the creation of networks, collaboration and new forms of action. The interviewees emphasised that the programme was too small to deal with broad metropolitan issues, but it was seen as important in furnishing the prerequisites for further collaboration.

In the recent years, the political discussion about the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region has entailed both a deepening and a broadening of metropolitan governance (see also Kuokkanen forthcoming b). This has concerned the institutional model of metropolitan governance, the policy issues present and the geographical scope of metropolitan collaboration. All these phenomena were already present in my interviews conducted in 2008 and early 2009. In the interviews with the public officials from the Ministry of Employment and Economy (during the time of the Citizen Channel project, working for the Ministry of the Interior) and from the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, the main motivations for deepening metropolitan collaboration were the existence of policy issues that transcended municipal boundaries. Issues mentioned in the interviews included land use, housing and transport, the prevention of segregation, the integration of immigrants, the provision of labour and the organisation of services, urban competitiveness and environmental questions. These issues are also present in the later reports on metropolitan governance (see Metropolialueen esiselvitys 2013, Rakennepoliittinen ohjelma talouden kasvuedellytysten vahvistamiseksi ja julkisen talouden kestävyysvajeen umpeen kuromikseksi 2013, Valtiovarainministeriö 2014).

When you look at the size of the Urban Programme, it's too small to address all the metropolitan issues. It's just a small piece of handiwork in the meantime. But bigger money flows, bigger measures are required from the state administration to allocate resources to the municipalities and to solve these major issues. Land use and housing and transport are related to this. And the biggest issues are the education of immigrants, the workforce, developing entrepreneurship, all this, and then integration.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

At the time when I was doing my interviews, the public officials spoke of a shift towards a “second phase” of metropolitan governance, in which the sphere of actors would be extended from the four municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area to the broader Helsinki Region of 14 (or at widest 16) municipalities. As was noted in Chapter 5.1, the Urban Programmes were originally instituted in what Hajer (2003b) has called an institutional void, with relatively few existing institutions, norms and practices. The interviewees emphasised the achievements of the Urban Programmes in developing collaboration between the four municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area – in other words, in creating norms and practices in that institutional void. However, according to the interviews, there was a new institutional void concerning the metropolitan governance across the broader Helsinki Region, where new norms and forms of action should be agreed upon. It must be nevertheless noted that the collaboration within the Helsinki Region has increased in recent years, even if it is still in a period of transition and there is considerable uncertainty about potential municipal mergers and forms of governance.

In the interviews, the complex relationship between the municipalities and the state in the development of metropolitan governance was clearly evident. As was noted in Chapter 5.1, those municipalities involved in the Urban Programme saw it primarily as self-organised collaboration and development work in spite of the pressure directed from the state. However, many of the interviewees involved in national urban policy saw the Urban Programme as part of a broader urban policy framework. The development of metropolitan policy at the state level was seen in these interviews as an investment on the part of the state in current policy issues and challenges at the metropolitan level even though it involved negotiation, collaboration processes and partnerships between the state and the municipalities involved. Whereas the Urban Programme was only a development programme for new forms of action and collaboration, several interviewees wanted real investment to solve metropolitan issues. At the same time, however, the benefits of programmes and projects as flexible instruments which allowed for development, trial and experimentation were emphasised in many of these interviews (see also Chapter 5.1).

An issue which was relatively little evident on the political agenda at the time of my interviews, with relatively few structures and established forms of action (effectively forming another “institutional void”, Hajer 2003b), was metropolitan participation (see also Kuokkanen forthcoming b). Especially at the time when I was doing my interviews, the issue of democracy and participation at the metropolitan level was a secondary one in the metropolitan governance debate – something that also characterised the findings of earlier research on the topic (Haila & Le Galès 2005). This theme was present in several of the interviews. The first citation from the Citizen Channel project administration emphasises in accordance with the logic of the project the need for metropolitan forms of participation. However, as the

second citation from a municipal official shows, metropolitan governance was at that time still in a preparatory phase and the issue of participation was not the first priority in the discussion about future collaboration models.

In my opinion, there should be structures for participation at the metropolitan level. The fact that there aren't largely stems from the fact that there is no metropolitan decision-making. Because it's not possible to make metropolitan decisions, nobody does so, so nobody takes responsibility for metropolitan participation.

Project administration, NGO or other association

There is certainly a need [for metropolitan forms of participation] but at the moment it is quite challenging, because our metropolitan cooperation is in a developmental phase... We sort of figure out opportunities for cooperation and sketch how our common future might be, (...) so in that context, this participation isn't yet like a block on the table. Yet it is all the time there in the background.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

However, during recent years, the issue of democracy and participation has been present in the Finnish reports on metropolitan governance (Metropolialueen esiselvitys 2013, Valtiovarainministeriö 2014). In 2013, the Finnish government made a decision on an elected metropolitan council (Rakennepoliittinen ohjelma talouden kasvuedellytysten vahvistamiseksi ja julkisen talouden kestävyysvajeen umpeen kuromikseksi 2013), but because of internal conflicts and the interconnection of the issue of metropolitan governance with a broader restructuring of the municipal and services structure, the coalition government (technically, two governments) which was in power in 2011–2015 was not able to make any final decisions. As things currently stand, the situation of metropolitan governance is still open. Besides creating elected institutions at the metropolitan level, research reports informing metropolitan policy and recent pamphlet-type interventions on the topic have suggested the development of other forms and levels of participation, such the bolstering of the neighbourhood-level in parallel with the development of metropolitan governance structures (Taipale 2011, Tolkki et al. 2011).

One theme in the interviews concerned the different levels of participation across the metropolitan area. In Finland, the municipality is traditionally the level of local political participation especially from the perspective of representative democracy (Haila & Le Galès 2005). At the same time, the sub-municipal or the neighbourhood level has in the earlier literature been seen as a platform for direct participation, either through direct citizen action or through neighbourhood associations (see e.g. Staffans 2004, Bäcklund 2007, Cochrane 2007, Purcell 2007). Such perspectives were generally evident in the interviews regardless of the background of the interviewee. However, the

interviewees also reflected on the role of metropolitan participation and on the shifting of functions between the various levels.

Well, in a way, [the most important level of participation] is the city level, because the money is there, for example the budget is decided there. And it has an effect on what kind of services you get at local level. But on the other hand, it would be much easier for people – they are much more expert on the issues affecting their local areas than on the issues of the municipality, let alone those of the whole metropolitan region. So in that sense, I would keep the city level, but get the local perspective more in there.

Project administration, NGO or other association

In Citizen Channel, residents' knowledge of metropolitan development was mainly seen in terms of "the metropolitan dimension of everyday life". From that perspective, it was emphasised that residents cross municipal borders in their everyday life and to some extent, use public services across these borders. As this was especially true in the border areas of the municipalities, residents were seen as a source of local, experience-based knowledge that nevertheless had a metropolitan dimension. This theme is analysed in detail in the next subchapter.

6.2.2 CITIZEN CHANNEL AND "THE METROPOLITAN DIMENSION OF EVERYDAY LIFE"

As Citizen Channel was part of a development programme that aimed to increase metropolitan cooperation inside the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, the project needed to have a metropolitan dimension in the development of participation. In the Citizen Channel, this issue was addressed by choosing pilot areas for the project that crossed municipal boundaries. The idea of the project was to involve neighbourhoods – or more precisely, groupings of several neighbourhoods – along the border areas of the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and enhance collaboration between the various actors in these areas, such as neighbourhood association activists and library workers. By doing so, the Citizen Channel project tied neighbourhood-level direct participation with metropolitan issues, or as the subtitle of the project suggested, the project was about "metropolitan cooperation at the local level" (Kansalaiskanava – Seutuyhteistyötä paikallistasolla a). In the pilot areas, the "functional" neighbourhood and everyday life of the inhabitants ignored administrative municipal borders. The use of this perspective as a starting point for developing metropolitan participation was seen as a novel and innovative thing in the interviews, as channels of participation are normally restricted to municipal boundaries while direct forms of resident participation usually take place at neighbourhood level.

In the interviews, the idea of the “metropolitan dimension of everyday life” was broadly present (see also Kuokkanen forthcoming b). It was not only related to the neighbourhoods near the municipal borders as was the case with the pilot areas of the Citizen Channel project, but more generally to the everyday life of residents of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area or the broader Helsinki Region who commute between the municipalities in their everyday lives. In the interviews, the Citizen Channel project administration and the participants in the project presented the metropolitan dimension of everyday life in a very concrete way, through various examples of the use of local services across municipal borders, as illustrated in the first citation below. However, it was also apparent in the interviews with the higher-level public officials who talked about the functional urban region and the organisation of services, as the second citation shows.

I think that for instance this day care, that you can bring your child to day care in Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa for instance next to your workplace, these are reasonable [forms of cooperation], or that you can go to school in the neighbouring municipality. Now our waste collection and the bus lines are common, and this sector-based [collaboration] should be deepened. (...) In a way these issues of everyday life are important.

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

And then this, our aim is to remove the administrative borders, this is a general aim. The everyday life of the residents does not recognise administrative borders. That is the biggest issue.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

The “metropolitan dimension of everyday life” was also the main legitimisation for municipal mergers in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area for those interviewees that supported them. However, many of the interviewees at the project level – NGOs and street-level bureaucrats present in the broader project administration as well as neighbourhood association activists participating in the project – were sceptical about the creation of metropolitan-level institutions or direct municipal mergers inside the Helsinki Metropolitan Area or the broader Helsinki Region. As was noted in Chapter 3.2, the issue of metropolitan governance is highly conflictual both at the municipal and at the national levels. According to this study, this is also the case with grassroots level actors such as the street-level municipal officials, NGOs and resident activists.

Many of the interviewees, despite their positive view of the “metropolitan dimension of everyday life”, feared that the development towards more metropolitan cooperation, either metropolitan-level institutions or direct municipal mergers, was moving decision-making further away from the local level. This was seen in these interviews as a threat to local democracy (see also

Cochrane 2007, Purcell 2007, Pinson 2009, 206–207), but also to the organisation of local services. However, even these interviewees supported forms of inter-municipal cooperation, especially in sectoral service provision and along the border areas between the municipalities.

In my opinion, the worst-case scenario at the moment is, of course, that if the Helsinki Metropolitan Area merges into a bigger entity, at the same time this local democracy will recede into the distance.

Project administration, municipality

I think [the most important aim of urban policy] is that we little people should be remembered here so that we don't get lost in the wheels of bureaucracy. They are making such massive systems. (...) When everything is merged, there are big and effective units, but how does the little person cope? (...) [But] the different sectors like libraries collaborate [across municipal borders] and that could probably be deepened little by little.

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

In the metropolitan governance literature, network governance has been presented as an alternative to municipal mergers and metropolitan-level institutions and as a way to enhance metropolitan democracy through a deliberative framework and the activation of stakeholders in metropolitan governance networks (Lefèvre 1998, Kübler & Heinelt 2005, Kübler & Schwab 2007). According to the interviews, metropolitan programmes and projects were nevertheless insufficient from the perspective of resident participation and metropolitan democracy. Even though the interviewees were divided on the development of institutionalised structures at metropolitan level, they saw a need to develop citizen participation as part of metropolitan governance in a situation where metropolitan collaboration was intensifying.

The impact of metropolitan development on citizen participation was in the interviews seen from a number of perspectives. First, the “metropolitan dimension of everyday life” and growing metropolitan collaboration were seen as reasons to create forms of citizen participation that would transcend municipal borders or cover the whole metropolitan region, which was one of the ideas behind the Citizen Channel project. Some of the interviewees from the project level emphasised the need to develop feedback systems that would cross municipal borders. However, it must be noted from some of the interviews with the project administration that others were more sceptical about this idea – especially the municipalities in the Citizen Channel project management group.

The everyday life of people is an entity. We are not delimited, our needs don't end inside our own municipality. (...) And then the view of our management group was that this participation happens through one's

own municipality. But if your child is at day care in the neighbouring municipality, you can't give much feedback to your municipality, participate. (...) There must be [a feedback channel], but it hasn't been thought out, there is nothing ready for it, it doesn't have any form.

Project administration, NGO or other association

Second, in the interviews, various forms of direct participation especially at the sub-municipal and neighbourhood levels were seen as ways to compensate the development towards metropolitan-level institutions which were shifting decision-making further from the local level. This theme has also been present in the more recent research reports on the development of the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region, and in political and societal discussion on the topic (Tolkki et al. 2011, Taipale 2011). According to this logic, the development of metropolitan structures should include the simultaneous development of institutionalised sub-municipal decision-making such as neighbourhood councils. In this context, some of the interviewees brought up the possible use of local referendums.

It must be noted that the interviewees were divided on the topic. Even though several supported the creation of neighbourhood-level councils in parallel with the development of metropolitan structures, others were more critical of the development of any institutionalised neighbourhood-level governance structures. As was noted in Chapter 6.1, many interviewees saw the institutionalised structures of neighbourhood governance as bureaucratic, limited or non-innovative and it was unclear whether they could be viewed as representative or participatory structures. In the interviews, these people expressed preferences for more flexible forms of participation, such as the development of Internet-based direct participation.

I would like to have these smaller units like in the Leppävaara and Myyrmäki areas, these local committees which would have even more power, like a neighbourhood administration. (...) If the cities are merged, we need these local administrations or local units, in my opinion.

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

I think participation cannot be detached from these other levels of decision-making, it goes alongside them. And then in my opinion, active participation by citizens and residents should not be brought about through strict council systems. I think there should be new kinds of creativity in these models.

Project administration, municipality

In the development of metropolitan participation, the interviewees brought up the forms of action created during the Citizen Channel project, especially the organisation of local networks and forums. The idea of a “border area forum”

that would meet on a regular basis in an area that spanned municipal borders was mentioned. As was noted in Chapter 6.1, several interviewees emphasised the need for local coordinators at the neighbourhood level, which could act as links between the various levels. This theme was present during the Citizen Channel project, although it was not included in the final “toolbox”.

Some of the interviewees considered that the question of the different levels of participation such as the neighbourhood, the municipality or the metropolitan level was losing its importance because of Internet-based tools which could transcend these borders. From this perspective, these interviewees were of the view that emphasis should not be placed on the levels of participation *per se* but rather on the different tools that allowed participation and interaction. Some from the Citizen Channel project administration and the Urban Programme management group discussed the development of explicitly metropolitan forms of web-based participation. Here, they mentioned the existing metropolitan websites, which, according to them, should be developed to allow more activity and interaction.

The development trend that remains to be assessed later is very much concentrated in this world of the Internet. We are developing very strongly our metropolitan portal. (...) I have put quite a lot of hope in it because I have understood that the world is going in that direction.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

Finally, it must be remembered that the development of participation and democracy as a part of metropolitan governance is not only related to direct participation, but to the institutions of representative democracy. As was noted in Chapter 5.1, the high-level municipal officials emphasised the strategic framework of the Urban Programme and its subordination to strategic – and thus democratic and political – steering, even if this framework is in practice relatively vague and allows for multiple interpretations. In the case of the Helsinki Region, at least until recently it looked like programme- and project- based metropolitan development was only a transition phase towards more institutionalised forms of metropolitan governance, which would also imply the existence of elected bodies at the metropolitan level or, alternatively, broad municipal mergers (see Metropolialueen esiselvitys 2013, Rakennepoliittinen ohjelma talouden kasvuedellytysten vahvistamiseksi ja julkisen talouden kestävyysvajeen umpeen kuromiseksi 2013, Valtiovarainministeriö 2014). However, at the moment, the situation is still open and the issue of metropolitan governance is characterised by a certain degree of political conflict both locally and nationally.

As was noted in Chapter 2.5, Marc Purcell (2007, 202–203) states that the heterogeneity of current democratic theories means that it is very difficult to determine *a priori* the most “democratic” scale at which to organise governance and that governance structures at the metropolitan scale may or may not be more democratic than smaller or larger-scale structures. According

to Purcell, these scales are contingent and will result from particular political struggles among particular actors in particular times and places. In this study, the interviewees did follow some of the basic assumptions of the previous literature, such as the role of the municipality as the site for representative democracy and the neighbourhood as a site for local participation, while the development of metropolitan participation was a more complex issue. The next subchapter will concentrate on a special problem in the development of metropolitan participation, namely differences in the administrative and participatory cultures of the municipalities.

6.2.3 MUNICIPAL CULTURES AS A PROBLEM IN DEVELOPING METROPOLITAN PARTICIPATION

A specific problem in developing participation at the metropolitan level was, according to the interviews, the differences in the administrative cultures of the four cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. This included differences in the way in which the channels of direct citizen participation were organised in the four municipalities (for similar findings from youth participation policy, see Kallio et al. 2015; see also Kuokkanen forthcoming b). Even if there were small nuances, the picture presented was very similar regardless of whom I was interviewing.

In Helsinki, the interviewees emphasised the strong role that Helka had acquired as a discussion partner for the municipalities in issues of participation as it was the umbrella organisation for neighbourhood associations. In Vantaa, the main channels of citizen participation were the sub-municipal local committees appointed by the municipal council. In Espoo, the interviewees emphasised the role of active, educated inhabitants and their opportunities to direct contacts through, for instance, the Internet. At the time when I was doing my interviews, Espoo too had a system of local committees (see e.g. Bäcklund 2007), which was, however, abolished in 2009 when Espoo opted for less institutionalised resident forums instead. Espoo had also an umbrella association for its neighbourhood associations (*Espoon Kaupunginosayhdistysten liitto ry.*, EKYL), which was quite similar to Helka but had a weaker role in decision-making, while Vantaa had no such similar umbrella organisation. Unfortunately, I was not able to interview the representative from the small municipality of Kauniainen. In the interviews, Kauniainen was sometimes mentioned as an ideal-sized small municipality with a high level of social cohesion – which, of course, can be partly related to the economic status of the municipality, a relatively high level of better-off, educated inhabitants and a relatively low level of societal fragmentation. The following citation well illustrates how the different participatory cultures were presented in the interviews.

I have the impression that in Espoo, because of the demography, there are quite a few educated, affluent people, who of course can defend

their interests and the city has invested in them. (...) Then in Vantaa these [sub-municipal] local committees, the extension of the official administration, channel this activism. (...) And in Helsinki, the most direct and strongest connections to policy preparation go through Helka and the neighbourhood associations. So there are clear differences in the position of civic activity and forms of action.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

In the interviews, all the municipalities (with the exception of Kauniainen) received criticism for the way in which citizen participation was organised in them. Helsinki was seen as having an especially strong role for the non-elected municipal officials, and as being the most difficult for outsiders to access and the most resistant to change. Even though Helsinki's model of participation, based on a strong role for neighbourhood associations and their umbrella organisation Helka, was not directly criticised, the interviews included general criticism on the representativeness of resident associations, as was noted in Chapter 6.1. However, at least one interviewee emphasised the proactivity of Helsinki because of its close partnership with Helka and saw it as a problem that a similar model did not exist in the other cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. In Espoo, one of the librarians saw the emphasis on better-off, well-educated inhabitants as not giving enough tools for vulnerable groups such as immigrants to participate. Finally, in Vantaa, some interviewees criticised the low interest in and resources for citizen participation, the lack of an umbrella organisation for the neighbourhood associations, and the relatively bureaucratic and implicitly party political nature of the local committees.

The emphasis on the municipal models and traditions of organising participation led to differing interpretations about the objectives of Citizen Channel from, on the one the hand, the paid project workers and many of the representatives of the steering group of the project (consisting of representatives of Helka and a variety of experts, NGO representatives and street-level bureaucrats from the field of local participation), and on the other, the management group of the project, which included higher-level municipal officials. Those who had been working closely on the implementation of the project explained in the interviews their view on why the original aim of the project, the creation of a model of participation for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, changed to the more modest idea of a "toolbox" for participation. According to the interviews, this was due to criticism that Citizen Channel had received from the municipalities represented in the management group. As the municipalities saw it, the difference in the administrative cultures and models of participation made it impossible to develop a common model for citizen participation for the municipalities. This was one of the main reasons for the problems in the implementation of the results of the Citizen Channel project once it had ended.

The reluctance of the municipalities to create a general model of metropolitan participation as a result of the project, related also, in my interpretation, to limits to individual municipal officials' discretionary powers and to the broader framework of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and its political priorities, which did not include the issue of direct metropolitan participation. Several interviewees, irrespective of their background, emphasised the difficulties associated with the implementation of a project on citizen participation in a metropolitan context – or in other words, in an “institutional void” (Hajer 2003b). However, the representatives of the municipalities in the management group of the project saw the project as successful and that the final results of the project – i.e. the toolbox for participation along with the more tacit results such as networking and the sharing of experiences – were from their perspective useful. The way in which these interviewees presented this issue was fairly consistent, as the following quotes from two municipal officials from different municipalities show.

I would say that our biggest difficulties were with the different cultures of the cities, administrative cultures and practices. There can't be, apart from these general tools, anything that goes “This is the model of participation for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, let's do things together this way”.

Project administration, municipality

In quite an early phase we recognised that there isn't this single model thinking – that wouldn't fit here. In my opinion, this project didn't have any [controversies]. On the contrary, it has been really interesting to hear about the forms of action in the other municipalities, to understand what context they are talking from, why they act the way they do.”

Project administration, municipality

In conclusion, it can be said that the development of metropolitan participation is a difficult and complex issue and it has not been at the forefront of the debate on metropolitan governance. However, many of the residents of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region cross municipal borders and use services across them in their everyday life. This was one of the central issues in the Citizen Channel project. However, the municipalities involved highlighted differences in the administrative and participatory cultures in the various municipalities of the region and the difficulty of developing a common model for participation. I will come back to these themes when I assess the impact and continuity of the Citizen Channel project in Chapter 7.

6.3 SUMMING UP: THE COMPLEX ISSUE OF DEVELOPING (METROPOLITAN) PARTICIPATION

The findings of this study on the discourse, issues and challenges around the development of participation reflect a more general international framework presented in the current literature combined with the specificity of the Finnish context. As was noted in Chapter 2, the governance literature emphasises the complexity and pluralisation of societies, with new spatial, temporal and sectoral dynamics. This extends to the development of participatory devices. According to this study, in the “participatory turn” of public administration, there are several, partly overlapping and partly contradictory expectations. Many of them are related to the development of local democracy and to residents’ local knowledge, but there are also other forms of reasoning emanating from the modernisation of the public administration and the development of public services. In the Finnish case, the development of participation is shaped to some degree by the Finnish context of strong municipalities, the tradition of “near democracy” and the role of neighbourhood associations in it. At the municipal level, the local context and the municipal administrative and “participatory” cultures have to be taken into account.

In the development of participation, there are several challenges. These are related first, to the capacities of public administration to react to citizen participation and to the complex relationships between the various working logics and, ultimately, forms of democracy obtaining among citizen activists, the public administration and representative institutions. Second, in the development of participation, there are various models ranging from (more) individual to (more) collective or representative forms. A specific issue is how the participatory devices organised by public authorities or closely related actors connect with the freer forms of bottom-up citizen mobilisation. Issues around the participating citizens themselves include their representativeness, their competence and their motivation.

In general, the actors involved in the development of participation stressed that the organisation of citizen participation is in a process of change. In this process, the plurality of the actors and participatory arenas should be acknowledged. At the same time, the interviewees warned against dismissing the role of the institutions of representative democracy – which at the municipal level means the municipal councils and other positions of trust. This has not always been the case in earlier participatory initiatives where participation has been seen as presenting an ethos of participatory democracy and a critique of existing bureaucracy (Nousiainen 2011). However, in the recent Finnish political initiatives on democracy policy, the strengthening of the representative institutions of municipal democracy is present as a theme (Oikeusministeriö 2014, 33). One of the central findings of this study, concretised in the interviews with the Citizen Channel project participants (see Chapter 5.3) is that “matters matter” (see also Leino & Laine 2012). In the

development of participatory devices, the emphasis should not only be on the tools for participation but on the actual issues that matter to the participating citizens.

The views of the actors on the general “participatory” turn of public administration in municipalities presented in this chapter do not give clear support to either an “optimistic” or “pessimistic” interpretation as presented in Chapter 2.3. As was noted, the interviewees saw both potential and pitfalls in the development of direct forms of citizen participation. Yet while the first part of this chapter mainly concentrated on the views of the actors on participation, the actual situation in the municipalities was another thing. We shall now consider the issue of metropolitan participation as it arose in the context of the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project as an empirical case of citizen participation.

Despite the “participatory turn” or the increasing development of participatory devices in public administration, the issue of metropolitan democracy or metropolitan participation is a more recent one and has not been so high on the political agenda. Metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the broader Helsinki Region is at the moment in a period of transition and there is uncertainty and political conflict around the issue both locally and nationally. At the same time, there are several policy issues which have a metropolitan dimension and transcend municipal boundaries.

Until recently, the development of metropolitan governance seems to have followed a trajectory which has included all the models present in the literature (see Chapter 2.5) from competition to loose network- and programme-based collaboration towards considerable pressure for institutional consolidation and the development of metropolitan-level structures or direct municipal mergers. According to this research, the Urban Programmes have been important first steps for metropolitan governance as they have enhanced collaboration, consensus and trust between the municipalities involved, thus creating norms and practices in the institutional void (Hajer 2003b). However, recent metropolitan governance developments have led to new forms of institutional void as the institutional arrangements, policy issues and geographical scope of metropolitan governance are debated. Even though the issue of representative metropolitan institutions rose onto the political agenda during the last government (technically, last two governments), the issues of metropolitan citizen participation and broader metropolitan democracy remain unresolved at the moment.

The main findings of this study concerning metropolitan-level participation are twofold. First, the “metropolitan dimension of everyday life” for residents is independent of administrative borders. This finding supports the need to think about municipal services and their organisation from a perspective which transcends municipal borders. This extends to opportunities to participate and give feedback, as was suggested in the Citizen Channel project.

However, it must be noted that the “metropolitan dimension of everyday life” does not inevitably entail support for institutionalised forms of metropolitan governance such as municipal mergers or metropolitan-level institutions; street-level officials, local NGOs and resident activists are divided on the issue, many of them quite sceptical. The question of local democracy in particular – defined as a possibility to influence the near environment – is important for these actors, with the fear that consolidation of metropolitan structures will shift power away from the local level. Another, partly interrelated worry concerns the functioning of local services and the possibility to affect them. However, as was noted in earlier research, it is difficult to define *a priori* the most “democratic” scale of participation as these scales are contingent and result from particular political struggles among particular actors in particular times and places (Purcell 2007, 202–203). At the same time, the development of information and communication technology is creating new forms and channels for participation which are not necessarily tied to place.

Second, from the perspective of municipalities, the development of a common “metropolitan model” for direct citizen participation is extremely difficult. The municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (not to mention the broader Helsinki Region) have organised their channels of citizen participation in different ways as a consequence of the administrative – and even participatory – cultures of these cities. These differences are related to the various aspects of the “participatory turn”, as the municipalities have to varying degrees emphasised the role of active citizens, residents’ associations or more institutionalised forms of sub-municipal councils. However, they also stem from an older tradition, as in the case of the capital city Helsinki, whose legacy of a powerful role for non-elected municipal officials was regularly mentioned in the interviews.

Thus far, the issue of democracy at the metropolitan level in the case of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area gives slightly more support to the “pessimistic” than the “optimistic” interpretation. The Finnish metropolitan governance debate has primarily concentrated on issues other than democracy and participation and there is a strong tendency for networking among non-elected municipal officials. However, as was noted in Chapters 3.2 and 5.1, simultaneous with programme- and project-based initiatives such as the Urban Programmes, there has been a development of strategic steering and common organs for high-level elected municipal officials. As the metropolitan governance debate under the previous government showed, even the issue of directly elected metropolitan institutions came onto the political agenda, but without resulting in any final political decisions on the topic. Meanwhile, the idea of direct metropolitan participation presented in the Citizen Channel project could not lead to the establishment of a general model as the project organisers had wished but instead produced the more modest “toolbox” for participation.

The framework of the Finnish municipalities and the more specific context of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area can be seen as playing a role in the development of participation. First, the development of participation is based on the strong role of municipalities. Municipalities are still the central arenas of local democracy; they have the central decision-making institutions and in the context of metropolitan participation, even their administrative and participatory cultures shape the way in which metropolitan governance can be organised. Regarding the development of direct forms of participation, the interviewees were in a more or less general consensus about the need to safeguard the institutions of representative municipal democracy and their role in the ultimate decision-making despite the development of direct forms of participation. However, the strong role of non-elected municipal officials – related in several interviews to the Finnish political culture, and more specifically, to that of the capital city, Helsinki – was seen as emanating “from the Tsarist era”. As the role of the municipalities in the Urban Programme showed (Chapter 5.1), this strong role for non-elected officials also tends to characterise programme- and project-based action in a similar way to that suggested in the governance literature (e.g. Skelcher et al. 2013, 22). Second, the idea of neighbourhoods as sites of local democracy can be traced to the international literature (Cochrane 2007, Purcell 2007, 202, Pinson 2009, 206–207, also see Chapter 2.5), but also to the Finnish tradition of neighbourhood associations and the notion of “near democracy” (Nousiainen 1998, 336).

This chapter has dealt with the development of participation both generally and at the metropolitan level. In the next chapter, more emphasis will be placed on the use of projects as tools for developing participation, especially in the light of the experiences from Citizen Channel. The central thesis of this study is that the development of participation in the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project cannot be understood in its entirety without analysing the use of programmes and projects as policy tools in the development of participation. Further, it will be stated that the projectification of public administration has a crucial impact on the actors involved, on the role of participation and on the continuity and impact of the action.

7 PROJECTIFICATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTICIPATION

As was noted in Chapter 2, governance scholars have concentrated on the presumed effectiveness and democratic qualities of governance. Similar forms of reasoning have developed around the issue of projectification, as projects have been seen as effective and targeted ways to implement policy and offer opportunities to coordinate interests and mobilise stakeholders. This chapter will concentrate on the use of projects with particular emphasis on the development of participation, drawing on the experiences from the Citizen Channel project. First, we will look at the roles that NGOs can have in participatory projects before analysing the role of the actual participants and participation in general. After that, we will take the case of Citizen Channel and reflect on the concrete impact of participatory projects after the project funding has ended.

7.1 NEW ROLES FOR NGOS IN PARTICIPATORY PROJECTS

An important theme in governance literature is the changing relationship between the public sector, the market and civil society. As was noted in Chapter 2.3, the new forms of governance have opened new opportunities for certain groups of actors. However, there is a risk that the governance arrangements favour those actors with resources (Bang & Sørensen 1999, Geddes 2000, Sørensen 2005, Pinson 2009, McLaverty 2011). In the project literature, it has been stated that projects favour active actors that have the capacity to create and maintain networks and that have the qualities and the will to apply for project funding (Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009, Kovách & Kučerová 2006, Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, Pinson 2009).

In the interviews, Helka was described in similar terms regardless of whom I was speaking to. These were the professional nature of the association and the association's links, on the one hand, to the municipal administration and on the other, to the grassroots level. In this context, the interviewees also spoke about the trustworthiness and credibility of the association. These themes will be analysed in detail in this subchapter.

7.1.1 PROFESSIONALS IN PROJECTS AND PARTICIPATION

In the interviews, Helka – and to some extent, the whole Citizen Channel project administration including the stakeholders in the steering and management groups – was conceived as a professional organisation. The professionalism of Helka was seen in the interviews in two ways. First, Helka

was a *professional in project management*, similar to what has been presented in the literature on the “project class” or in the broader project and association literatures (Kovács & Kučerová 2006, see also Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, Tranvik & Selle 2008, Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009). As has been noted, the management and realisation of projects require a certain level of expertise, which is especially the case in certain public sector projects such as EU ones (cf. Kuokkanen 2004, Kovács & Kučerová 2006). The professional manner in which the Citizen Channel project was planned and realised was mentioned in all the actor groups that I interviewed: the Urban Programme administration, the broader project administration (including the more distant stakeholders of the steering and management groups) and the participants in the project. According to Nonjon (2005, 96), the need for the capability to manage the practical details of participatory arrangements is often emphasised in participatory projects. The professionalism of Helka as a project organiser also related to their close contacts with the public administration, as they were well equipped to act within the framework of the Urban Programme.

Helka has sound competence in this kind of work. They have been to the city of Helsinki an important partner in other ways, too – and they know how to cooperate. And they have good local networks and an extensive group of resident actors.

Project administration, municipality

According to the analysis of Norwegian associations by Tommy Tranvik and Per Selle (2008), the professionalism of associations is related, first, to their degree of centralization, which means a strong role for the umbrella organisation and its paid staff rather than the member organisations and the voluntary actors. Second, there is a linkage between professionalism and the adoption of an administrative culture in an association, which includes a stronger emphasis on regulations, routines and the issues of economic and project management (cf. Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009). Tranvik and Selle see that these processes happen most strongly at the level of central umbrella organisations (in their case, at the national level), whereas the grassroots level member associations are more strongly characterized by established ideas of voluntarism and grassroots mobilisation. Moreover, they state that while the umbrella organisations and the paid workers are not “bureaucrats obeying regulations” or “value-neutral experts”, they are still characterised by a certain degree of idealism that has traditionally been attributed to civic associations. These themes were also present in this study, even though Helka was only a city-level umbrella association consisting of neighbourhood associations in Helsinki.

If the first form of professionalism concerned the practical details of project management, the second way to see Helka’s professionalism in the interviews was to emphasise its role as a *professional in participation*. This aspect was central to the way in which the interviewees described Helka. Participatory

expertise was not only attributed to Helka, but characterised the whole steering group (and to some extent, the management group) of the project. According to the analysis by Magali Nonjon (2005, 2012) on French urban policy, a group of “professionals in participation” has emerged, specialised on the more or less formalised methodology of “how to make people participate” (Nonjon 2012, 81). This same group of actors has been called by Mark Warren (2009) “democracy entrepreneurs”.

There was not only this concrete project but also the discussions that we had in the management group and the steering group of the project, so they were really interesting. In a way it was clear that we really had the best experts in the whole country there. And also that there was broad engagement from the field of voluntary associations in the steering group.

Project administration, NGO or other association

According to the study by Magali Nonjon (2005) on French urban policies, the birth of “professionals in participation” is strongly related to the institutionalisation of French urban policy in the 1980s and to the development of public management and the “participatory turn” in French public policies in the 1990s and 2000s. When French urban policy became established in the 1980s, former activists who had been working with participation in French neighbourhoods gradually became “institutionalised”. This affected their work in two ways: First, instead of working in grassroots level projects, these actors started to be funded by more established institutions such as rental housing organisations and broader policy programmes. Second, instead of developing isolated participatory initiatives and experiments in a certain neighbourhood, these actors concentrated more and more on producing general methodological guides on participation and generally applicable participatory tools and typologies. According to Nonjon, the development of public management and the “participatory turn” of public policies in the 1990s and 2000s have continued this development, with the rise of new professionals, often from an academic background.

In the previous literature on participation, the role of certain groups of professionals has been emphasised as being at the frontline of the development of participation. As scholars such as Warren (2009) state, public officials and especially more grassroots or mid-level officials are meeting the growing demands for citizen participation. Special groups of such actors include, first, urban planners who have been at the frontline of the “participatory turn” since the 1990s (e.g. Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Healey 2006), or in Finland, since the reform of the Land Use and Planning Act in 2000 (Bäcklund et al. 2002, Puustinen 2006). More recently, demands to promote participation and inclusion have broadened to a number of policy fields (on the Finnish case, see Chapter 3.1). For instance in social work, the active role of the customer is being emphasised to a growing degree (Laitinen

& Niskala 2013, Nonjon 2012, 89). Researchers also play an important role in the development of participatory devices, not only theoretically, but through various forms of action research and the facilitation of deliberative practices (e.g. Hajer & Wagenaar 2003a, Wagenaar 2011, see also Bamberg 2012). In the French case, Nonjon (2005, 2012) takes the view that even though the professionals in participation sometimes belong directly to the public administration, the development of participation by professionals has many similarities with the more general use of private consultants in public administration. In this context, she sees as important the role not only of former activists and research centres and think-tanks in the field of urban studies, but also of more recent groups such as consultants, communication professionals and specialists in public management.

The actors in the Citizen Channel project administration represented these groups. As was noted in Chapter 4.2, the actors in the management group of the project consisted of relatively high-level municipal officials together with representatives from Helka and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, while the actors in the steering group of the project included both municipal officials and NGOs, and other actors such as researchers from universities and research institutes. The municipal officials in the steering group were mainly planners, researchers or working in the field of social services, while those representing associations were doing so on behalf of the umbrella organisations for neighbourhood associations, detached housing associations and community centres, and the association for futures studies.

In French urban policy, Nonjon (2005, 2012) sees former activists and their organisations – independent urban research organisations, and also associations – have been able to transform their resources as activists into professional competence. These resources can include political, professional or associational engagement, but may also extend to the capability to create and use networks and presence “in the field”. Nonjon concentrates in her analysis in what she calls “field capital” (capital “terrain”), which means long experience of acting in the neighbourhoods and being in touch with local people from various social backgrounds. According to Nonjon, this “field capital” is a bonus that former activists and their organisations possess when they become professionals in participation. However, when participatory policies become more and more institutionalised, Nonjon states that the “field capital” must be channelled into a more general approach, concentrating not only on concrete neighbourhoods but on the way in which participatory mechanisms can be modelled and transferred to other sites. This requires both technical competence, which means the capability to produce participatory tools, and intellectual competence or the capacity to theorise and model participatory practices. At the same time, this “field capital” is challenged by other forms of competence such as academic knowledge on participation and social science methodology.

In Citizen Channel, these two forms of participatory expertise – the connection “to the field” and the academic knowledge on participation – were

intertwined. Most of the actors interviewed from the project administration had an academic background and many of them had been doing research on the issue of participation. According to the interviews, even though the actors there came from various backgrounds, they all represented participatory expertise and this aspect was more important than their concrete affiliations. This indicates a blurring of boundaries between the public, private and third sector in projects, along with a circulation of the actors involved between the three – something that I have noticed in my earlier research on EU Structural Fund projects in Finland (Kuokkanen 2004). In the Citizen Channel project administration, many of the actors had been involved in various projects and worked in various places, sometimes as municipal officials, sometimes as researchers and sometimes in collaboration with Helka. They were also often involved in neighbourhood associations in their free time besides their actual job.

The street-level municipal officials in the steering group of the project, in common with the representatives of Helka and the other NGOs in the steering group, constituted “professionals in participation”, as they were working with the concrete issue of participation and its development in their everyday work. Some interviewees made a distinction between the upper-level officials in the management group of the Citizen Channel project and the street-level officials in the steering group, where the latter were seen as having closer connections “to the field” or the grassroots level. This aspect has been present in the earlier literature on street-level officials (see e.g. Barnes et al. 2007). In the case of Citizen Channel, it was reinforced by the various overlapping roles that the actors of the steering group had assumed.

I can consider myself whether I'm a resident activist or a municipal official. This interface is not important. (...) In a way, every one of us is also a resident, so when can you define when somebody is a resident activist? I think it is more “professionalism” in quotes – developer professionalism – that I think is the important thing.

Project administration, municipality

The viewpoint of the management group was that yes, this is working very well in our city. And then you have this steering group person who is working in practice, so he or she can say that this is really not working. [The management group members,] they don't necessarily have this knowledge on how it functions in practice.

Project administration, NGO or other association

However, Helka's or the steering group's “field capital” did not only include knowledge “from the field” but also contacts there and the possibility of mobilising them if needed. As was noted, Helka is the umbrella association for neighbourhood associations in Helsinki and its members consist ultimately of activists from neighbourhood associations. These contacts were, indeed,

actively mobilised during the Citizen Channel project, as the most active participants in the project were members and often chairpersons of neighbourhood associations in the pilot areas of the project. The neighbourhood associations were also channels for spreading information on the project. However, the interviewees from the project administration emphasised that the mobilisation of neighbourhood associations had to be related to local issues in the neighbourhoods. As will be seen in Chapter 7.2, this was one of the crucial points about Citizen Channel, although one that was not always unproblematic.

In the interviews, it became clear that it was an explicit strategy of Helka to profile itself not only as a representative of the actual members (i.e. neighbourhood associations), but more broadly as an expert in participation. The realisation and management of participatory projects such as Helka's earlier neighbourhood home page project, Citizen Channel or later, an international EU-funded Interreg project on resident participation were viewed as important ways to enhance this expertise, as seen in the following citation from the project administration. A similar point of view was shared by some of the upper-level municipal officials from the Urban Programme management group who emphasised the cumulation of the expertise of Helka through their involvement in various projects.

Helka has grown into an expert in knowledge and participation in a way little by little. And then through these projects we have developed our own competence and got these things that we can offer to our members or to active people in general, or various [tools] to activate people and make them participate. We have developed in small steps and then the more we have done, the more we have grown in confidence and competence and developed in quite an organic, nice way in what we feel is the right direction.

Project administration, NGO or other association

As the citation above indicates, the roles of Helka as the representative of neighbourhood associations in Helsinki and as an expert in participation were seen as reinforcing one another, as the members of the associations were also active citizens who would benefit from the development of participatory devices. In their analysis of Norwegian associations, Tranvik and Selle (2008) have shown similar strategies adopted by umbrella organisations in the development of e-governance and e-democracy. According to them, even if these processes can lead to a certain centralisation, bureaucratisation and professionalisation in the central associations, they are also a way to provide participatory tools for grassroots level member associations. In my interviews, the earlier neighbourhood home page project by Helka was often mentioned in this respect.

Notwithstanding the professional role of Helka and the broader project administration, I got the impression that most actors involved in Citizen

Channel – both NGO representatives and municipal officials – were genuinely interested in the development of participation (see also Chapter 5.2). Tranvik and Selle (2008) have called this group of actors the “professional idealists”. More recently, our research project on EU-funded regional development projects in Finland has shown the existence of a group of project managers that could be labelled as “enthusiasts” – actors who are strongly devoted to their projects and to the development of their regions (Sjöblom et al. forthcoming). In her analysis, Matthies (2000) sees projects as being able to combine both the “economic” and the “ethical” rationality of NGOs, or in other words, the “managerial” modes of steering in associations (cf. Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009) and their role as actors and mobilisers of civil society. Even Nonjon (2012, 93) states that there has not been a clear-cut shift from “activism” to “professionalism”, but that some actors have combined both dimensions. As seen in the following citations, some of the interviewees in the project administration talked about the development of participation in terms of a “dream” or a “passion” for them.

There is the philosophical discussion that we have, then there is the implementation – that’s when the people who have been doing these things for a long time in the city put all their dreams together and think that they’ll do something about it – and hire some young researcher to do it.

Project administration, municipality

[Citizen participation], I feel it so important to me personally and it’s for me like an object of passion.

Project administration, NGO or other association

In this subchapter, Helka (and the broader steering group of the Citizen Channel project) has been presented as a professional in projects and participation. This professionalism was seen to emanate from two directions. Helka was perceived in the interviews as having “field capital”, connections to and knowledge from the grassroots level. At the same time, it was seen as a professional in projects because it was able to work in close contact with the public administration. In the interviews, Helka was viewed more broadly as an intermediary organisation between the public administration and the grassroots level. This theme is analysed in the next subchapter.

7.1.2 INTERMEDIARY ORGANISATIONS

Alongside Helka’s professional nature, its contacts and networks were highlighted in a number of interviews. These encompassed, most importantly, its contacts to both the city level and the “grassroots” level – to the neighbourhood associations and their members. In the interviews, Helka’s

contacts were intimately bound up with its professionalism. Its close contacts with the public administration were seen as the trait of a professional and trustworthy partner and project organiser, while its links to the grassroots level were conceived as a crucial element of what can be seen as a form of “field capital” (Nonjon 2012).

Helka is good in that way that it is sort of between the administration and civil society. It has links specifically to civil society, but it has also been for a long time a known actor so that it has good connections with the administration.

Project administration, NGO or other association

Of the cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, Helsinki was naturally Helka’s most important partner, because it represents neighbourhood associations in the city. More generally, in the interviews, it was mentioned that “the Helka model” or the strong role of the umbrella organisation of neighbourhood associations was typical of Helsinki, whereas Espoo and Vantaa (and the small municipality of Kauniainen) had different models for the organisation of citizen participation (see Chapter 6.2). However, as the Citizen Channel project concentrated on the metropolitan level, it included contacts with Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen. Other of Helka’s contacts mentioned in the interviews included other projects and initiatives going on at the same time concerning citizen participation and other public and third sector organisations such as the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. In a later phase, after Citizen Channel, Helka was involved in an EU-funded Interreg project which included the Swedish city of Norrköping and the Latvian city of Riga and partner organisations from these cities (CADDIES: Creating attractive developed and dynamic societies together with inhabitants: Project organisation). In earlier literature, those of Helka’s networks which have been mentioned explicitly are the city of Helsinki, especially its public works, city planning and culture departments; regional architects; research unit; and local forums organised in neighbourhoods (Fabricius 2004). From this perspective, it can be said that the various projects in which the association has been involved more recently have created new networks and linkages for them.

Generally, the concept of *intermediary organisation* can characterise the role that Helka assumed in the Citizen Channel project, as its linkages to both the administration and to the neighbourhood level were important. This concept of intermediary organisation was explicitly used by some of the interviewees, as the following citation from a municipal official belonging to the broader project administration shows. This status was seen to characterise the role that Helka had taken on more generally since the late 1990s, not only for the purposes of Citizen Channel.

Helka's greatness came about during the planning of the previous Master Plan in 1998. And in a way, Helka became a central intermediary organisation which functions between the municipality and resident and neighbourhood associations. It's like a dissemination channel.

Project administration, municipality

As was noted in Chapter 2.3, this idea of intermediary organisations can be traced back to the Tocquevillean analysis of civil society as an intermediary level between citizens and the state, which has often been contrasted with Marxist ideas about civil society as a site of protest and resistance (Friedmann 1998, 21). Even though associations have been central in the Nordic welfare states, during its building phase in particular, and the model of intermediary organisations has many elements in common with earlier neo-corporatist arrangements (cf. Alapuro & Stenius 1987, Eikås & Selle 2003, Rothstein 2003), the rise of a new group of intermediary organisations as an aspect of collaborative governance has been noted by several researchers. According to Munro et al. (2008), community leaders become “dual intermediaries” which means they act between the formal institutional design of partnership governance and the wider political constituency of citizens, service users and stakeholders. In a similar tone, Nonjon (2012, 94) speaks of the double role of the professionals in participation, consisting of the “professional” role which resembles the work of a consultant working for an external principal, and the “associational” role of building contacts at local level and listening to citizens. In organisation literature, the concept of boundary spanner describes the “bridging” role of one actor or organisation between different environments (Williams 2002).

In the Finnish context, it seems as if the traditional layered model of associations starting from the local level and including various levels of umbrella organisations puts in place many of the prerequisites for these kinds of arrangements. First, it includes grassroots-level associations which act as links to the local level and give a kind of democratic mandate for the upper level structures. Second, the umbrella organisation acts as a collaboration and negotiation partner at an upper administrative level and channels the demands of the various grassroots-level member associations. The fact that Helka was the umbrella organisation for neighbourhood associations was in the interviews seen as giving it a mandate to represent the local level and granting it an overview of the neighbourhoods as a whole denied to individual neighbourhood associations, as the two citations below from public officials in the Urban Programme management group show.

Helka is good and so are Helka-type actors, because they have a certain mandate – a community of associations.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

There have been [in the Urban Programme] quite a small number of these associations and actually, such parties haven't necessarily been found that might be good collaboration partners, except for these few that exist [like] Helka. Because in these associations, there's this perennial problem that many of these neighbourhood associations, they look at things quite narrowly from the perspective of their own area, so a broader view on urban policy development is not immediately found.

Urban Programme management group, other actor

In the interviews, even though Helka was seen as an intermediary organisation, it was nevertheless conceived as representing a different way of thinking from that of the public administration. This can be related to the idea present in governance literature about the role of NGOs in representing local knowledge and creating innovations when compared with the regular public administration (e.g. Luomala 2003, Sulkunen 2006, 27, see also Chapter 2) and could be seen as one element of the expertise and “field capital” of Helka as presented in the previous subchapter. According to my earlier research, there are similar expectations concerning the role of the third sector in EU-funded Structural Fund projects implemented in Finland (Kuokkanen 2004, Kuokkanen & Vihinen 2009). Our most recent findings on the topic indicate this is not only a form of rhetoric, but that projects led by NGOs, companies or other “outsiders” involve a higher level of networking and new forms of action than the municipally-led projects, which are based on a more traditional bureaucratic logic (Sjöblom et al. forthcoming).

According to the interviews on the Citizen Channel project, one explanation might be that individual municipal officials cannot easily put forward new ideas that would deviate from the official line of the municipality. It was something that I noticed, too, in the interviews with the upper-level municipal officials who presented the official strategies of the cities and avoided talking about undecided issues or giving criticism. However, this did not concern the interviews with the street-level officials, who were more critical towards the existing system. Meanwhile, the NGO representatives tended to emphasise their own roles in presenting an alternative view to that of the municipalities.

The representatives of cities, they don't dare to talk or can't talk about the controversial information about their system, or they have already gone, crushed between the wheels – so it's difficult to get anything new from there. From this perspective, this, coming a bit against the flow, I see it as a strength. I don't feel that it causes any problems.

Project administration, NGO or other association

I think Helka is an ideal organisation in this sense compared to what they have in the other municipalities. (...) There is, in a way, this

controversy that when municipal officials develop things, their perspective is different.

Project administration, municipality

The role of intermediary organisation requires that the relationships with partners are well taken care of. In the interviews, a central quality associated with Helka besides its professionalism and contacts was trust, confidence and credibility. In the interviews, it was seen that the role of Helka as a professional actor and intermediary organisation had been built up little by little. Important events mentioned in the interviews were the Master Plan process in 2002 (see also Fabricius 2004), and more recently, the projects that Helka had conducted. The interviews showed the importance of trust and confidence in the maintenance of networks, which is strongly present in the literature on governance and projects, but also more broadly in the research on social capital, boundary spanners and in the game theory literature on repeated cooperative games (e.g. Putnam 1993, 2000, Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, Williams 2002, Hajer 2003b, Rothstein 2003). In the project literature, the role of trust in networks is seen as a way to create long-lasting relations in the context of projects. According to Pinson (2009, 343), the creation of cooperation and confidence are the way in which projects establish themselves long term. Similarly, Boltanski and Chiapello (1999, 157) see a project as being a section of a network that is highly active only for a short period of time, but which allows the construction of more enduring links which can be activated when needed.

However, in the context of network-based governance, trust cannot be assumed (Hajer 2003b, 184). The credibility of an organisation as a project organiser and as a trustworthy partner is cumulative, as previous experiences induce future collaboration opportunities. From this perspective, it can be stated that Helka did not only act as an intermediary organisation between the public administration and the grassroots level, but also between the short-term perspective of individual projects and the long-term perspective of more lasting networks and forms of collaboration. For Helka, the building of trust and networks has been an explicit strategy, as the following interview extract shows.

What we as Helka have done and are doing all the time with our action is that we always try to do our best in taking care of all the connections everywhere so that we get more so that we are trusted and [the partners think] that they can do these things, they have interesting ideas, OK. Then we get new opportunities and become involved in these connections again. It is like a gradual building of trust and a networked form of action today.

Project administration, NGO or other association

The credibility and reliability of Helka, as with its role as an intermediary organisation, had two dimensions: it had to be a reliable partner for cities and for residents. From the perspective of the cities, this credibility and reliability emanated from the elements that were presented before: its role as a professional project organiser, its participatory expertise and its “field capital” (Nonjon 2012) or connection to the local level. Moreover, the role of Helka as an outsider in the relatively politicised metropolitan governance debate was in some interviews seen as a positive thing. Some interviewees considered that Helka was in fact the best possible organisation to conduct a project like Citizen Channel, because metropolitan citizen participation had no clear place in the regular municipal administration. However, as will be seen in Chapter 7.3, others were of the view that a project conducted by the cities themselves would have had more long-lasting effects and could have been more easily adapted to their normal organisations.

I think it was very good [that Helka was leading the project], because it made it credible. Who else could have conducted it? The alternatives would have been a consultant, no, or then a city, an office in a city, a project leader of a unit. Of course it could have been like that, but when we talk about Citizen Channel I can't really believe that it would have been anything other than an NGO. And Helka (...) has more resources than a small neighbourhood association because it is an umbrella organisation.

Project administration, municipality

In general, the close relationship of Helka and the Citizen Channel project administration with the public administration was seen in the interviews as a positive thing. However, it must be noted that some interviewees from the Urban Programme management group and the project administration talked about the active ways in which Helka built relations with the city level as “PR activity” (see Chapter 5.1). However, even these interviewees made a distinction between the upper-level relations with the city and the actual implementation of the Citizen Channel project, on which they took a positive or more neutral stance.

From the perspective of residents, it was important that Citizen Channel was not seen as a top-down action or as symbolic participation, described in the interviews as “making residents play” (see Chapter 6.1). According to the interviewees – especially those from the project administration – some of the local activists started to get tired of constant projects and participatory arrangements which brought little in the way of concrete impacts. This was reflected in one of the interviews with the librarians. From that perspective, the short-term nature of the Citizen Channel project was a risk for the creation of trust among residents (see also Kivelä et al. 2007). As will be noted in Chapter 7.3, many of the participants in Citizen Channel were quite confused when the project finished and some were disappointed with it. However,

according to the interviews, especially those with the project administration, it was easier for Helka to approach the local actors than it was for the representatives of the municipal administration. This was to some degree related to the way in which the Citizen Channel project was presented to local actors –through concrete local issues, despite the ultimate objective of the project being to develop a model or “toolbox” for participation (see Chapter 7.2).

For us as Helka it is easy to go [to work in the field], because we are a bit like their peers. If there is a public official coming, there is immediately [a reaction] that this is coming down from the top again.

Project administration, NGO or other association

The role of Helka in the Citizen Channel project bears much resemblance to the picture of the “big one” in the “projective city” presented by Boltanski and Chiapello (1999), which has also been visible in the boundary spanner literature (Williams 2002; see also Chapter 2.4). According to the Boltanski and Chiapello, the ideal type of a successful actor in the “projective city” is characterised by a combination of various attributes. First, the “big one” has to be able to create connections and confidence. Second, engagement in a project, which is often characterised by uncertainty and complexity, requires enthusiasm, confidence in the other project partners, flexibility and adaptability. Flexibility and adaptability are, in turn, related to autonomy and capacity for risk-taking, to the gathering of information and to intuition and talent. The authors see that in the network society, there is a strong connection between social and informational capital, as information is gathered through networks and personal experience (cf. the notion of “field capital” as presented above). The “big ones” have to know the local context, be present there in person and create relationships there, but also engage with other actors and tolerate their differences. According to the authors, the “big ones” in the “projective city” are usually project managers, but also other project partners. Another type of “big one” is the expert, who is also characterised by competence, contacts and experience and is often consulted during a project.

The active role of associations in public sector projects can also be related to the participatory and deliberative potentials of governance and to the broadening sphere of actors in public policies. As was noted in Chapter 2.3, some governance scholars have even sketched a picture of an “associative democracy”. This model would be based on a strong role for associations as providers of services and channels of democracy, with an institutionalised status for them. However, according to the model, the associations themselves should pay more attention to issues of representativeness and inclusion and the model would include a competition element with members choosing between various associations. (Hirst 2000; see also Torfing & Triantafyllou 2011b.)

As was noted in Chapter 2.3, earlier literature has included criticism directed towards the central role of associations. According to Sørensen (2005, 350), it can be a risk from the perspective of liberal democracy when the civil society becomes enmeshed with the structures of the state, and this form of critique is especially pronounced among neo-Marxist scholars (see Friedmann 1998, 21). Governance scholars have feared the birth of new “democratic elites” (Bang and Sørensen 1999) and the bureaucratisation of associations which can exclude ordinary citizens from participation or reduce them to simple targets of policies (Hirst 2000, 20; Sintomer and de Maillard 2007). In project research, Boltanski and Chiapello (1999) see the excluded in the “projective city” as the “small ones” who lack the mobility and network-creating capacity of the “big ones”, while Pinson (2009) emphasises the exclusion of actors without resources or with dissident opinions.

These forms of criticism can in principle be applied to a model based on a limited group of professionals in projects and participation and intermediary organisations, as was the case with the Citizen Channel project. Although this form of critique was not directly evident in the interview data, the role of the actual participants in the project needs further analysis. Similarly, the role of Helka and the broader Citizen Channel project administration as professionals in participation is related to the role of participation itself in democratic innovations. It can be stated that as a part of the “participatory turn” of the public administration and the proliferation of project-based development, citizen participation has become an object of development, which leads to further questions about the role and function of participation. This theme will be addressed in the next subchapter.

7.2 PARTICIPATION AS A DEVELOPMENT OBJECT

As was noted in Chapter 2.3, the development of participation can be related to the literature on democratic innovations (Saward 2000, Bengtsson 2008, Smith 2009, Newton & Geissel 2012; cf. Warren, 2009, McLaverty 2011), where participation and democracy are seen as things which can be developed through political interventions. According to the earlier literature, these innovations can be produced directly by the public administration or by a group of external “democracy entrepreneurs” or “professionals in participation” (Nonjon 2005, 2012, Warren 2009). As with the logic of democratic innovations, the original aim of the Citizen Channel project was to create a model of participation for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, which during the project became a “toolbox” for participation.

According to the interviews, the merit of Citizen Channel was the way in which it could develop participation through concrete, innovative and grassroots forms of action. Even if these forms of participation were not necessarily novel, the interviewees saw the project as being successful in gathering together and testing the various participatory devices. This was a

theme that was present throughout the interviews with the Urban Programme management group and the project administration, including the stakeholders of the project.

The project was in a very difficult field, so from my point of view it even exceeded expectations. The objective there was unrealistic – that it would be possible to agree on a clear form of collaboration to increase metropolitan participation, it was quite a difficult area. There have been interesting developments, all these rounds in libraries, for instance, where there [was] participation in this “you can always have an impact” style. They went all over the metropolitan area and [there] were these very concrete things that seemed to work.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

However, the development of participation poses questions from the perspective of democratic theory. Citizen participation, as it is traditionally understood in political science, has a close linkage to democracy (see Chapter 2.3); for instance, the theory of participatory democracy emphasises the role of participation in influencing political decision-making and the forms of direct democracy (Gilljam & Hermansson 2003, 19). However, in democratic theory, citizen participation and deliberation are also associated with indirect consequences such as civic learning, public discussion and social capital (e.g. Pateman 1970, Barber 1984, Grönlund et al. 2010, Putnam 1993, 2000). The literature on governance and urban policy has shown that current public discourses on participation and the concrete participatory devices present a variety of functions for participation, such as the creation of joint knowledge, empowerment and responsabilisation, the creation of social capital and related economic effects, and the development of public services and administration (Barnes et al. 2007, Cochrane 2007, Kuokkanen forthcoming a, Nonjon 2005; see also Chapters 2.3 and 2.5).

In her analysis, Magali Nonjon (2005, 105) sees the crucial questions in the development of participation not as being “who decides” or “what is decided” but rather “how it is decided”. This is in line with some of the findings on democratic innovations, governance and citizen participation, which show deficits both on the input side, in issues of representativeness and inclusion (related to “who decides”) and on the output side, in the actual effectiveness of participation and in the citizens’ opportunities to influence the agenda or the final decision-making (or “what is decided”) (McLaverty 2011, 414; cf. Dahl 2006, 9, Dahl 1989, 106–131; see also Chapter 2.3). At the same time, the process or the throughput dimension (or “how it is decided”) is emphasised as an aspect of current participatory and deliberative innovations (e.g. Skelcher et al. 2013, 22).

The logic presented above applied equally to the Citizen Channel project. The question of “who decides” – or in McLaverty’s (2011) framework, the questions of representativeness and inclusion – was not central, as the project

mobilised only a small proportion of the inhabitants in a few neighbourhoods of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Citizen Channel was, most of all, a pilot project, based on a limited number of people, often activists in local neighbourhood associations, and working in certain pilot areas, not across the whole metropolitan area. Even though the project wanted to attract local inhabitants to its events and, according to the interviews, sometimes succeeded quite well in doing so, the aim of the project was not to get a “representative sample” of residents at their events – something which would have nevertheless been difficult for a relatively small and temporarily limited project. It must be noted that in some of the Finnish literature, the limited representativeness of neighbourhood associations has not been considered a problem, as they have primarily been seen as representing expertise and local knowledge rather than as constituting a representative sample of residents (Staffans 2004).

The second question, “what is decided” – or in the words of McLaverty (2011), the control of the agenda and the effectiveness of participation in influencing decisions – was even more complex. As was noted, the project had a double strategy of concentrating both on the concrete local issues in the pilot areas and on the development of a model or a toolbox for participation. The residents had the possibility to influence the issues that were discussed in the pilot areas, as these issues were chosen together with the participating inhabitants at the beginning of the project in joint workshops.

Right at the beginning, we chose [the themes], we had these workshops. Together with the residents we were thinking which themes affecting the border area [of the municipalities] they would like to deal with – through which themes this interaction would be developed or tested. And these themes came from the residents.

Project administration, NGO or other association

However, the ultimate aim of Citizen Channel was to *develop* participation, not to influence these issues during the course of the project. As such, the final control of the agenda stayed in the hands of the project administration. According to the interviews, it was a clear decision on the part of the project administration that the aim of the project was not to address the concrete local issues of the target areas, but to create a model or a toolbox for participation. In some of the interviews, this was seen as a very general methodology in action research and in the development of participation.

Even if the project in itself was not a channel for the demands of the inhabitants, it was the wish of the project’s organisers to have the participating residents learn to use the participatory tools that were tested during the project, understand the possibility to cross municipal borders and be able to profit from the networks created during the project at a later phase. Some interviewees from the project administration said that even though the project as such did not pass on the demands of the residents, the residents would be

able to use other channels to do it. The following quote from the project administration includes the concept of *facilitation*, which is crucial in the various deliberative approaches (e.g. Wagenaar 2011, 228–233), where the aim of professional facilitators is to help participation or deliberation without taking a stance in it themselves.

We had this principle that Citizen Channel itself doesn't take a stand on anything and it isn't a channel for people to complain or to bring up issues. (...) We had the objective that we go there and organise something so that the resident actors themselves are involved. And of course the hope or the objective was that if it turns out to be a good thing and one that works, then these resident actors will get themselves a new tool that they can carry on with, even in collaboration with municipal officials. That was our thought: to go there and facilitate for them, so that they get to the beginning and if it's a good thing, they can continue independently.

Project administration, NGO or other association

Despite the objective of developing a model or toolbox for participation, the Citizen Channel project was presented to local residents primarily through concrete local issues, for instance by organising discussions about local services, transport connections and the development of a local river area. In democratic theory, enlightened understanding of the issues treated is seen as a crucial element of democratic participation and usually, the participatory and deliberative procedures are seen as a way to enhance this understanding (McLaverly 2011, 414; Dahl 2006, 9, see also Dahl 1989, 106–131). The Citizen Channel project, however, was based on the double strategy of developing participatory tools by concentrating on concrete local issues. The overall picture from my interviews was that the residents concentrated on these local issues when they were talking about the project in general, and the modelling part of the project was unknown to them (see Chapter 5.3). However, it must be noted that the various forms of participation and interaction were tested in practice during the project and some of the participating librarians took some of these tools into use. Moreover, the project did have an Internet site where the tools developed during the project were presented. The final results of the project were disseminated through various brochures, on the Internet and in a closing seminar organised by the project, which in principle were available to and open for all the participants in the project.

Among the project organisers, the emphasis on concrete issues was viewed as a prerequisite for a successful project. It was actually seen amongst the project organisers as one of the central *innovations* of the project, because it was a way to get the local inhabitants involved in the process and to overcome the general problem of low levels of interest in participatory devices (see Chapter 6.1). In the interviews, the project organisers said that the development of participatory models as such would not be interesting enough

for the local inhabitants. As was noted in Chapter 5.3, it is the concreteness of the issues being addressed that matters in local participation. Thus, according to the project administration, the way in which local residents could be activated was only through concrete local issues.

It does not sell to say “You are welcome to participate” or “Come and have an impact!” or “Do you want to interact?” It’s not selling. And nobody is interested in that. Instead, you have to go by means of a theme and say “Hey, now we are talking about transport! Do you feel that there are bad public transport connections in your area?” or “Are you afraid of the building of Ring Road II?” or something, you have to go that way, through the theme and the topic and the issue. It has clearly been the thing that you have to forget the word “participation” or the word “interaction”.

Project administration, NGO or other association

The concentration on local issues was also related to the time perspective of the project. According to the interviews, the creation of models and tools and especially their implementation in the municipal administration would need a long time. However, the interviewees at the project administration considered that for the participating residents, there was a need to see the concrete results of participation in a relatively short time in order to preclude the frustration often associated with participatory procedures (see Chapter 6.1). In the interviews, these two different time frames were seen as usual in development projects and action research.

However, the opinions of the interviewees among the project administration differed on whether they considered the participating residents to be properly aware of the idea of developing participation and whether the development of a model was useful from the residents’ perspective. In the following interview citations, the first is an example of an interviewee who saw residents as not being aware of the development of participatory tools, while understanding that this choice had been made in the project administration. The second interviewee from the broader project administration criticised the whole idea of participatory models as he or she considered that such models benefited high-level municipal officials rather than residents at the neighbourhood level. According to this interviewee, the emphasis should be on the concrete changes to current structures rather than on the development of models, as he or she did not see these models as having an effect on citizen participation at the grassroots level.

The aim of this project was to develop methods; it couldn’t take responsibility for issues of substance. This was the basic controversy. And there were events where the residents were there, but the question was more like if you are involved, what are your expectations. Do you think that this is a nice event, it’s nice to be involved, or do you expect something to change, or do you really think that we are developing

tools here? I believe that this development of tools as a theme wasn't probably opened up very much. And I think it's natural, because it can't be otherwise if changing things really takes ten years.

Project administration, municipality

The target was so much to do with models, modelling, but this modelling is more for the benefit of public officials. (...) From the grassroots level it doesn't always look so convincing, probably partly because we lack important structures, I think, so the models don't [do] anything.

Project administration, municipality

Some interviewees considered the relationship between the concrete citizen participation and the development of participatory tools to be a difficult issue and an underlying controversy for the duration of the project. This was reflected in some of the publications and websites produced by the project (Kansalaiskanava – seutuyhteistyötä paikallistasolla b). For the people working concretely in the project administration, it affected how they prioritised their working time during the project, as having the project function on two different levels was seen as requiring time and energy. According to the interviews, the three successive project managers emphasised to differing degrees concrete interaction with the residents and the development of a model or toolbox for participation. These differences depended partly on the personal interests of each project manager and partly on the phase the project was at.

According to the interviews, the difficulties in the development of participation were compounded by the complex issue of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the “institutional void” (Hajer 2003b) of metropolitan participation (see also Chapter 6.2). Several interviewees questioned whether participation could in practice be the main target of an individual project or whether it should be a cross-cutting theme in all kinds of projects and policies. From that perspective, it could also been related more clearly to concrete issues and developments in municipalities and act as a concrete channel of influence for residents.

[Participation] is a thing that should, in my opinion, be always taken into account in all projects and development work. It should be there in every case as one subfield. But it's a different thing to say whether it can be the only thing in a project. It might have been a challenge for us, too... No city would have started a project like that. This [metropolitan participation] is not of real substantial interest to any city, but it should be more like the cities have some joint project where this would be like one strand.

Project administration, NGO or other association

Citizen Channel is not uniquely Finnish in being an example of a participatory project. According to the study by Nonjon (2012) on French urban policy, there has been a shift “from participation as an object of study and action to participation as a tool”. Nonjon sees in her study a shift in the 1980s when the French neighbourhood-level urban policy became established. According to her, this instrumentalisation of participation meant a movement from grassroots-level participatory schemes towards a more general development of methodological guides on participation, participatory tools and typologies. The aim of these participatory schemes was less to empower residents as agents of local change and more to use participatory tools as a way to improve the functioning of public institutions. This phenomenon continued during the 1990s, but its emphasis shifted slightly, as the development of participation became more tightly connected to the development of public management. During the 2000s, the discourse of resident participation is still present in French policies. However, the aim of creating transferable methodologies of participation tends to routinize it and reduce it to one form of consultation and evaluation among several.

In her analysis, Nonjon (2005, 2012) sees a process of depoliticisation in French urban participatory projects (cf. Blaug 2002; Paddison 2009, Chapter 2.3; for a similar discussion on Finnish democracy policy, see Keränen 2007, Palonen 2009, Chapter 3.1). According to her, the technicisation of participation and the idea of participation as tools are replacing the political aims of participation. Moreover, the concentration of projects at the neighbourhood level is reinforcing the role of participation as the concrete development of the neighbourhood rather than a process for influencing policies. At the same time, several former activists and their organisations have turned into professionals in participation and the role of residents has shifted from one of advocacy to that of “technicians” and experts as users of the city. According to Nonjon, the opportunity for activism and influence in a project lies more in the application and planning phase than in affecting its final results.

As was noted in Chapter 5.3, Ricardo Blaug (2002) sees a cleavage between the objectives of what he calls “democratic engineering” and the aims of bottom-up activism. However, in contrast with Blaug’s analysis, the difference between the Citizen Channel project administration and the participants in the project was not primarily between more conservative and more transformative orientations of democracy, but rather between the idea of modelling participation and concrete issues. In his analysis, Blaug does employ the example of NGOs trying to assist democracy at grassroots level, where the “speaker and receiver understand their democratic activities very differently”. According to Blaug, the usual consequence in such situations is that the receivers are required to change their behaviour to “fit the organisational assumptions of those located nearer the centre of institutionalized political power”, implying a breakdown in communication between the two parts.

(ibid., 109.) It can be said that the Citizen Channel project was trying to adapt itself to the way in which “the receiver understood its democratic activities”, i.e. by approaching the project from the point of view of the concrete local issues rather than modelling. However, at the same time, this raised a new problem from the perspective of the existence or otherwise of an enlightened understanding of the whole project among the participants (McLavery 2011).

Among the participants in the project, there was no questioning of its general objectives. However, as was noted, they mainly concentrated on local issues in their neighbourhoods and I got the feeling that the formal objectives of Citizen Channel were more or less unknown to them. In general, they talked positively about the activities of the project and the networks created during it. However, at the time I was doing my interviews, the Citizen Channel project had just ended and the interviewees were uncertain as to the continuation of the activities that had been started during it. This theme will be analysed more profoundly in the next subchapter.

The overall picture of Citizen Channel from the perspective of democratic theory is mixed. On the one hand, according to my analysis of Citizen Channel and the findings of other authors (Nonjon 2005, 2012, McLavery 2011), it looks as if the practice of democratic innovations – especially projects developing democracy and participation – does not respond to the criteria of democratic theory about effective democratic participation, as the function of participation is shifting from a concrete form of influence to something that is developed, modelled and transferred to other contexts. This instrumentalisation of citizen participation itself is somewhat controversial in relation to the demands for local democracy and local knowledge, presented as central elements in the development of participation (see Chapter 6.1). It can also partly be an unintended consequence of project-based development work, as these projects – because of their short-term nature – need generalizable and transferable results in order to establish any degree of continuity (cf. Nonjon 2005, 2012).

On the other hand, it can be stated that current democratic theory does not have appropriate tools to understand the role of participation and democracy as an object of development, increasingly present in a variety of development projects (for an overview of EU-funded participatory projects in Finland, see Kuokkanen forthcoming a). In the earlier literature, Graham Smith (2009) has emphasised the role of transferability of the created models as a central component in the assessment of the “democratic qualities” of democratic innovations. If participation is developed through projects, this poses further questions about the role that the project form plays in this.

When it comes to Citizen Channel and the actual power and influence that the participating residents did enjoy, two reservations are needed. First, as was noted in the beginning of this subchapter, Citizen Channel was, most of all, a pilot and a development project, based on a limited number of people and working in certain pilot areas. If the aim of the project had been to promote local issues vis-à-vis the public administration or to concretely develop

neighbourhoods, it should have concentrated more intensely on the issues of the representativeness and inclusiveness of the actors involved. Second, it can be said that the project – at least potentially – did promote participation by creating a toolbox that could be used later in other contexts. In project literature, emphasis is placed not only on what is done during the project, but also on how the project affects the permanent organisation once it has ended (Jensen et al. 2007). The Urban Programme was, after all, a development programme, so from that perspective it was logical that citizen participation became the object of development and modelling according to the programme's own logic (and more generally, that of project-based policies). However, if that perspective is taken, the crucial question is what was done with the results of the project – the toolbox created during it – after the project was finished. This issue will be developed further in the next subchapter.

7.3 LIMITED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESULTS, ONGOING METAPROJECT

With projects, the question of continuity and anchorage is very important. According to the project literature, this does not mean that the project – which is supposed to be a unique and temporarily limited form of action (Packendorff 1995) – will continue indefinitely. However, the results of the project are usually assessed in relation to what in the project literature is called the permanent organisation (Jensen et al. 2007, Packendorff 1995). The Citizen Channel project was, in principle, related to at least three groups of actors: first, the participants in the project in the pilot areas, second, the permanent administration of the four municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, which were also the most central actors behind the Urban Programme, and third, the organisations that were represented in the project administration. In this subchapter, the continuation of the action and the implementation of the results of the project among the project participants and in the pilot areas will be addressed first, before moving on to look at continuity and the implementation of the results in the two other groups: the permanent administration of the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the core actors and stakeholders in the project administration.

7.3.1 LIMITED CONTINUITY AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL

At the grassroots level, the continuity and the implementation of the results of Citizen Channel after the project had finished had two elements. First, the participants in the project were rather confused about the ending of the project and the activities organised during it. Second, interviewees both from the project administration and among the participants of the project could

nevertheless mention some “small innovations” created during the project that continued after the project had ended.

At the time when I was doing my interviews with the Citizen Channel project participants, the project had just finished and many of the neighbourhood association activists and librarians were confused about the continuation of the activities that the project had started. Sometimes this caused frustration, especially if the interviewee had had similar experiences from previous projects (cf. Chapter 6.1). As was noted in Chapter 7.2, the project organisers had wished the participants of the project to be able to use the participatory tools after the project had ended. According to Boltanski and Chiapello (1999), the ideal model of projects is based on the assumption that the benefits and the empowering function of projects should “trickle down” from more central to more peripheral project actors. However, in their analysis, they see mobility as the most central issue that differentiates the “big ones” from the “small ones” in projects. The “big ones” or the well networked and resourced actors can move easily between projects, whereas the “small ones” remain immobile once the project ends.

A similar picture is seen in this study. The following citations from a librarian and a neighbourhood association activist show that interviewees were puzzled about the continuation of the project and frustrated about its ending. This theme was present throughout the interviews with the participants. In the interviews, limited continuity was not seen as a problem unique to Citizen Channel, but as one that characterises project-based development more generally, as the first citation shows.

This [interview] is a good place to unburden the frustration that projects start and they come, and they end, and all cooperation ends when they end.

Project participant, librarian

Well, concerning this Citizen Channel, as it was quite a loose thing it remained a bit unclear for me how it would continue. Did it stop here, so that we thought about these things a bit and then nobody is continuing with this thing of municipal borders anymore?

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

The confusion and frustration of the project participants after the ending of Citizen Channel can also be related to a broader change within the field of participation and more specifically, among the members of Helka and other local development actors (see also Chapters 5.3 and 6.1). The participating neighbourhood association activists were actively working to promote and solve local issues and several of them also had a background in political parties or established decision-making institutions. However, these actors did not have the same kind of “ad hoc or part time” attitude to their activism as the “Everyday Makers” presented by Bang and Sørensen (1999, 2001) or the more

recent ideal types of neighbourhood activists called “case experts” or “project conductors”. In Helka and in the development of neighbourhoods in Helsinki, there is a cleavage between the older generation of active neighbourhood association members, engaged in long-term work and registered associations, and a younger generation of activists involved in local networks, Facebook groups, the organisation of events and loose “town village movements” (Tulikukka 2012, 86). The activists in Citizen Channel belonged to the older generation of neighbourhood association activists, whereas Helka as an organisation has actively tried to combine elements from traditional neighbourhood association work and newer forms of network- and project-based action (cf. Tulikukka 2012, 85–87). It is probable that this cleavage between the working cultures became apparent in the Citizen Channel project and caused some of the confusion and frustration.

The project administration in particular (including the various stakeholders involved in the management and steering groups) emphasised that local development projects did leave traces at the local level. These interviewees saw many of the results as being relatively tacit, such as networks or new forms of action. According to the interviews, in those neighbourhoods which had a long history of local development projects in their area, the results of these projects were more visible. For instance, the suburb of Kontula, which has been a target area both of the EU’s URBAN Community Initiative and of municipally funded suburban development projects, was mentioned in one of the interviews as a positive example.

According to the interviews with the project administration, the small-scale and tacit results of projects were often taken into use at the organisational level. For instance, the neighbourhood association home pages of Helka, started as a project in the early 2000s, have now become part of their normal action. The interviewees from the project administration mentioned several positive elements relating to the results of projects within the organisations involved. These included, first, the enhancing of knowledge and competence both among individual project actors and in their background organisations, the opportunity to get a “practical handle” on things, and the schooling of new professionals who can, at a later phase, work in municipal administration and generate new forms of urban policy thinking there. In the case of the Citizen Channel project, what was seen as especially important was the competence that project managers would be able to make use of in their future work. At the same time, the steering and management group of the project included a relatively broad sphere of actors, and some of them said that they had promoted the results of the project in their own background organisations.

These projects and programmes, most of all these concrete projects, they are in a way a curse and a blessing. It’s easy to get funding for them (...) but then they end, the project money has been used, there hasn’t been enough time to get them rooted in practice and things need to be moved forward. That is the curse of projects. But I think the balance remains positive, because the competence of the actors grows

and (...) this knowledge becomes embedded in the organisations where they themselves operate, and they can go on to become public officials and so on. With projects, you get a practical handle on issues.

Project administration, municipality

Concerning the results of the Citizen Channel project and the grassroots level, the interviewees mentioned various small-scale forms of action and tacit results which had continued after the project or produced a concrete tool that could be used afterwards. "Small innovations" and tools developed during the project which were mentioned in the interviews included the contact lists of the relevant actors collected in the project, the "urban paths" developed during the project, and the mobile computer classes and meetings between officials and residents organised in libraries. In the interviews with the project administration, the "user democracy club" established during the project was seen as a useful form of action which had led to a concrete tool – guidelines for the self-evaluation of user democracy – that could be used after the project.

Geographically, the further development of "King's Triangle", which corresponded more or less to one of the pilot areas of the project situated in the border area between Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa, was seen as particularly benefiting from the action initiated in Citizen Channel. The interviewees from the project administration emphasised the applicability of the "toolbox" created during the project, which was disseminated on printed brochures and on the Internet after the project was over. In general, the interviewees highlighted the fact that the results and tools developed by Citizen Channel were available on the Internet after the project and could be used in other contexts after the project had finished – in principle by any actor, including those from other municipalities.

The material that was created during the project is in my opinion totally suitable for the use of public officials, persons in positions of trust and resident activists. This material is well presented on Helka's homepages. There you can find models of action for your work and for collecting feedback and developing new activities inside neighbourhoods and between them. The problem is how to get the various actors to the website and use the material.

Project administration, municipality

Even though the participants in the project – the neighbourhood association activists and the librarians – were more confused and critical about the ending of the project and less able to use its results in their future work than the project administration, many of them could nevertheless mention some results or forms of action that had remained from the project. Both the neighbourhood association activists and the librarians had created new networks during the project. Some of the librarians mentioned specific forms of action and participatory tools that had been taken into use after the project.

These included a mobile computer class at one library, but also a more general recognition that organising meetings between residents and municipal officials in libraries is a valid and useful activity and one that residents are interested in. The issues present in the following citations from the project participants were also mentioned in the interviews with the project administration as being concrete results of the project.

I could mostly say that I got to know new municipal officials through [the project], now I have better relations with these decision-makers and municipal officials so that I can fix these things, in a way our own village's issues with respect to the officials.

Project participant, neighbourhood association activist

After Citizen Channel we had Skype teaching at our own library, people could come to it. It wasn't related [to Citizen Channel], it was separate, but the idea was that we would invite these experts here for people, so we informed people about it and they knew when to come, these kinds of things. (...) [Through Citizen Channel] we got in a way confirmation that it's worth organising them and that people want them.

Project participant, librarian

All in all, it can be said that the continuity and the implementation of the results of the Citizen Channel project at the grassroots level were not without problems, as the participants in the project were rather confused or even frustrated about its ending. However, there were various small-scale results such as contacts, networks and new forms of action that continued after the project had finished. The most central aim of the project was to create a model of action – later, changed into a “toolbox” of participatory tools – for the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Region. As the followings subchapter shows, this objective was not easy and it did not succeed as well as the project administration had hoped, mainly because of opposition from the participating municipalities.

7.3.2 DIFFICULTIES IN IMPLEMENTING THE RESULTS IN MUNICIPALITIES

Usually in public sector projects, even if projects are conducted by external actors, the main targets of the results are the permanent institutions of the public administration (Jensen et al. 2007). This study shows, however, a cleavage between the regular administration of the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the Citizen Channel project. According to earlier research, this is relatively common in public sector projects. Even if an individual project or a broader policy programme consisting of several projects succeeds in creating new forms of action, there are difficulties in integrating

the results into the regular municipal administration (Häikiö 2005, Kivelä et al. 2007, Jensen et al. 2013, Sjöblom et al. forthcoming). At the same time, the literature on democratic innovations has shown a weak linkage between participatory and deliberative initiatives and actual decision-making (McLaverty 2011, 414, see also Chapter 2.3).

The interviewees both from the Urban Programme management group and the Citizen Channel project administration mentioned several, intertwined explanations for the problems in the implementation of the results of Citizen Channel in the municipal administration. In general, there were two, broad cleavages behind this: the relationship between projects and the permanent municipal organisation and that between NGOs and the municipal administration. In addition, as the aim of Citizen Channel was to develop participation, it encountered many of the general problems related to the development of participation analysed in Chapter 6.1. These problems were not unique to Citizen Channel but seem to characterise project-based development more generally. In their analysis of an employment project conducted by an NGO, Kivelä et al. (2007, 31) speak of the “triple marginal position” of “the project actor”, which prevented it from altering established practices. First, it was a temporary organisation in relation to the existing permanent organisations, which caused problems in creating long-term relations and thus had an effect on trust and collaboration with the permanent actors. Second, it was an NGO, whereas the central actors in the field were from the public sector. However, the third point made by Kivelä et al., the geographical location of the “project actor”, was less relevant in Citizen Channel. Even though it was mentioned in the interviews that the project was conducted by an association representing neighbourhood associations in Helsinki and more generally according to a “Helsinki model” for organising citizen participation (see Chapter 6.2), this was not seen as affecting the relationship that developed between the project and the other municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.

Despite the presence of the representatives of the municipalities in the management group of the Citizen Channel project, in practice several interviewees from both the Urban Programme management group and the project administration emphasised that Citizen Channel did not have a “host” in the four municipalities’ administration. This was partly related to the sectorised nature of the Finnish municipal administration. Even though the issue of participation is at least to some extent present in the municipal administration, it was, according to the interviews, in practice dispersed and fragmented (see also Bäcklund 2007). This problem was still more pronounced because the project was led by an NGO, whereas its results were mainly aimed at municipalities. Moreover, the fact that the project aimed to develop metropolitan participation made it especially difficult because of the “institutional void” (Hajer 2003b) at the metropolitan level, especially in the field of metropolitan participation (see Chapter 6.2). As was noted, the original aim of the Urban Programme was to tackle issues that did not fall under the

responsibility of the existing institutions, which caused part of the difficulties in the implementation of the results. However, the situation was rather different with the other projects which were conducted by municipal organisations or by the *de facto* semi-public regional development company Culminatum (see also the programme evaluations by Uusikylä & Valovirta 2003, Uusikylä et al. 2007), which was, according to the interviews, backed with strong political support.

Even if the organiser was really good and organised the project professionally, in something which relates to the cities' internal systems, to get participation there, the project should in a way come from inside the cities. You should in a way have the owner there.

Urban Programme management group, municipality

Even though we had both a management group and a steering group, and in the management group really high-level people from the cities, still in the end it seemed that we couldn't find a place. (...) An NGO like [Helka] can't start coordinating metropolitan participation without a place being set aside for it or somebody taking responsibility. It was really a challenge or a problem. But at the same time, it was also a result in a certain way that there is no place for metropolitan participation and nobody sees it as their own thing.

Project administration, NGO or other association

It must be noted that there were nevertheless representatives of the municipal administration in the Citizen Channel project administration. The management group of the project in particular included relatively high-level municipal officials who were supposed to act as links between the project and the municipal administration. The steering group of the project did include more street-level officials such as researchers, planners, and others working in the field of social services; but these officials saw a weaker linkage between their role in the project and their home municipalities than those in the management group. As street-level officials, they had much less power and influence in the municipalities than upper-level officials.

Although some of the interviewees especially from the project administration would have wanted a more active role for the municipalities in the Citizen Channel project, there were clearly cases where the high-level municipal officials in the management group of the project did use their role as “metagovernors” to steer the objectives and priorities of the project. The clearest case of this was when the project did not produce a general model for participation in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, but opted for a more modest “toolbox for participation” instead. As was noted in Chapter 6.2, this was mainly because of the different participatory and administrative cultures of the four municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. However, the municipalities which had participated in the project were positive about the

“toolbox” created in the course of it. Moreover, they saw that the project had created contacts with the other municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and enriched their knowledge of the forms and channels of participation used in the neighbouring municipalities.

Many interviewees in the project administration, especially representatives of NGOs, were disappointed at the way in which the municipalities steered the project, as they would have wanted to see more ambitious developments. The working logic of the municipalities appeared to them conservative and cautious, with relatively little courage to try and test new things or willingness to make compromises. Even if the interviewees in general mentioned problems in all the three big municipalities (i.e. Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa) in the field of developing participation, the administrative culture of Helsinki was singled out in some interviews – especially those with the project administration – as being the most rigid, based as it was on a strong role for the non-elected administration, strict boundaries and unspoken rules that were opaque to outsiders.

However, some interviewees in the steering group of the Citizen Channel project currently worked in or had previous working experience of municipal administration and some of these interviewees saw that Helka was not always familiar with the way in which the municipal administration functioned. The fact that Helka was an NGO which was run with limited resources and had a flexible organisation meant, according to these interviewees, that Helka and some of the other actors in the project administration did not properly understand the working logic of municipalities, which was slower and more rigid. These two different viewpoints are well reflected in the following citations.

The closer we have got to the end, [the municipalities] have sort of started setting conditions about what we want to say about the project, what our policy recommendations and statements are. So they have suddenly started to limit what we can say, a bit kind of ‘not like this, we can’t say that’. If for instance Helsinki’s block is like this and Espoo’s block is like that, they want to make it so that the only thing we can talk about is the interface surface.

Project administration, NGO or other association

This Helka’s action, they don’t always understand how a municipal organisation works. Sometimes I felt that because it’s an NGO and is run with small resources, so in a way to understand how the municipality functions and how processes there go forward and how things are done so I think (...), to Helka’s actors or for the others [in the steering group], it was not so familiar.

Project administration, NGO or other association

The interviews can be interpreted in such a way that, even though Helka was seen in them as a professional and reliable partner for the municipalities (see Chapter 7.1), there was still a gulf between the working logics of an NGO and that of the municipal administration (cf. Thornton et al. 2012). This is reflected in a recent publication by Helka's manager where the difficulty of reconciling different operational cultures from the "third sector, cultural production, business and public governance" in partnerships is mentioned (Tulikukka 2012, 87). According to our recent research, a similar cleavage between the collaborative governance arrangements in projects implemented by NGOs or market actors and the permanent municipal administration characterises projects in the field of regional policy in Finland (Sjöblom et al. forthcoming).

However, some interviewees – both NGO representatives and street-level municipal officials – saw the problems in the transfer of the results of the project as a consequence of a lack of political will and municipalities as uninterested in implementing the results of the project in practice (cf. Chapter 6.1; see also Klijn & Koppenjan 2000, Åström & Granberg 2007). In the more pessimistic interviews, projects were seen as a way to outsource issues that politicians and the administration did not consider important enough to integrate into the regular activities of municipalities, as the following two citations show.

I think that we don't need any projects anymore, I think we need political decisions now. We have an immense volume of experiments and projects and summaries and evaluations and opinions and experiences, and I don't think we get any new findings from any project. (...) It's easy to outsource participation (...) to projects that are outside the regular organisation of administration, and in the worst case, they stay there and don't change anything.

Project administration, municipality

The biggest problem in developing participation is that everything is done through projects and usually finishes when the funding ends. (...) In a way, the fact that it is always project-driven tells something about how important it is considered to be.

Project administration, NGO or other association

As was noted above, Citizen Channel could be seen as an example of outsourcing in two ways: first, it was a project and not a part of the regular municipal administration, and second, it was conducted by an NGO and not by the municipal administration(s). From the perspective of project outsourcing, Citizen Channel can be reflected in the typology formulated by Jensen et al. (2007). As was noted in Chapter 2.4, these authors see public sector projects as having several functions: reform projects aim to create new solutions and replace existing practices in permanent organisations; experimental projects try to solve a new assignment or work with a new target

group; collaboration projects involve several actors working on a joint project; and assignment projects work according to the idea of contracting out, with a principal–agent model. The Citizen Channel project involved several of the elements – such as collaboration and the testing of new ideas – central to experimental and collaboration projects. However, the project administration would have wanted the Citizen Channel project to be more of a reform project, leading to actual changes in the existing administration. Meanwhile, the most critical interviewees saw it as an assignment project, where the issue of participation is outsourced to projects outside the permanent administration.

The critical project literature finds the short-term nature of projects and the long-term persistence of the societal problems they are supposed to address as extremely problematic (Forssell et al. 2013, see also Sjöblom et al. 2012). In the Swedish context, the integration of immigrants is seen as a particularly difficult societal problem which is nevertheless addressed through “short-term experimental activity” (Forssell et al. 2013, 41). Similar findings have been made concerning the projectification of gender equality work in Finland (Brunila 2009). In the longer term, as a Swedish policy evaluation put it, it becomes “crowded at the project graveyard” (SOU 1998:19, 5, cited in Forssell et al. 2013, 41). In my study, a similar point of view was shared by those interviewees who had seen a succession of urban development and participation projects dating back to the early projects of the 1980s, many of which had encountered similar problems in the implementation of their results.

Besides the outsourcing of permanent tasks to projects, the outsourcing of public sector duties to the so-called third sector has been present in earlier literature, in Finland especially since the economic crisis of the 1990s (e.g. Siisiäinen et al. 2000, Helander 2003, Kuokkanen 2004). This has partly emanated from the traditional role that associations have had in Finland and more broadly in the Nordic countries, with a position “close to the state”, neo-corporatist arrangements, and delegation of certain public functions to associations (cf. Alapuro & Stenius 1987, Götz & Hackmann 2003, see also Chapter 3.1). In Finland, the financial crisis of the 1990s and the ideological changes that have occurred since the late 1980s have meant that new expectations have arisen with respect to the third sector in the provision of public services (Siisiäinen et al. 2000, Kuokkanen 2004). This is reflected in the international literature on governance (e.g. Pierre & Peters 2000) and co-production (Fledderus et al. 2014, Osborne 2010) and in the international policy examples such as the “Third Way” or the more recent “Big Society” in the United Kingdom.

In my earlier analysis on the topic, the role of the third sector in the implementation of projects is legitimised – at least on a discursive level – by a variety of intertwined elements: their supposed flexibility and proactivity, but also their connection to the grassroots level and to civil society (Kuokkanen 2004, Kuokkanen & Vihinen 2009). As has been noted in Chapter 7.1, it seems that the development of participation by NGOs emanates from this same logic

as result of their “field capital” (see Nonjon 2005, 2012), combined with their contacts to public administration.

According to the interviews, there are other controversies in the relationships between projects and the permanent administration. In the interviews, one of the municipal officials saw individual projects as not necessarily fitting into the framework of strategic steering where the municipal strategy sets priorities for policies which cannot be easily changed. As the role of elected municipal politicians has moved towards strategic steering, this becomes a question of democratic metagovernance, as the role of elected politicians has diminished in other fields (see Chapter 2.3). However, it must be noted that the Urban Programme was itself subordinate to a strategic framework, namely the common vision of the four municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the three pillars of development. This may imply that the challenge lies not only in the relationship between strategic steering by elected politicians and bottom-up forms of influence, but in the complex metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and in the overlapping metropolitan and municipal strategies. Another interviewee saw closer links between elected municipal politicians and the Urban Programme work as potentially enhancing the impact of projects; if only non-elected municipal officials are involved in the projects, the results are less likely to be implemented in the municipal administration.

It's a constant challenge in a project how to translate it into normal action; is there anything that has been translated into our current practices? There has probably been less than the project wished. But we have created a strategy for [the city] where we have defined objectives and through it a modus operandi, how we want to target things, how to do them. So I kind of understand that you cannot really change the organisation through projects.

Project administration, municipality

In these Urban Programme projects, the persons in elected positions of trust as a group aren't involved much. So then it is like preparatory work and if it never goes to the council level, it stops there.

Project administration, municipality

All in all, the results of the Citizen Channel project were relatively little implemented in the municipalities involved. The main reasons for this were the problematic relationships between short-term projects and the permanent municipal organisation and between NGOs and municipal administration, together with the difficult situation of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. In the following subchapter, we will nevertheless see that even though individual projects end, they are embedded in project networks and continued by other projects. This study will consider the impact that this

“metaproject” has on the functioning of public administration in the longer term.

7.3.3 AN ONGOING METAPROJECT

In general, the interviewees had controversial views on the use of projects as development tools in public administration and especially in the field of developing citizen participation. The challenges of project work – above all, problems with continuity and the implementation of results – were often mentioned in the interviews. Yet from the perspective of continuity, the most important finding was that in practice, individual projects are situated in broader networks of simultaneous and sequential projects (see also Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, Pinson 2009). In earlier literature, Pinson (2009) has not seen the short-termism of projects as a problem. For him, projects are a way to anticipate the future in a relatively flexible and dialogical way in an increasingly pluralistic and uncertain world. Pinson speaks of the importance of “meta-project” – or horizons, principles and policy discourses, which form a frame for singular projects – as a way to ensure continuity. According to Boltanski and Chiapello (1999, 158), individual projects have a beginning and an end, but they coexist, follow and replace one another and form a broader social structure or the organisation form of the “projective city”. These themes were also present in the interviews.

When a project ends, there should be an established form of action where they have thought about a model that works and has resources available. (...) All projects always have problems. Quite often then they sort of continue with the next project, the themes are broadened a bit and they go in another direction or they focus on certain themes. (...) It's like a continuum of projects, I see it like that, that we live in a project world.

Project administration, NGO or other association

Many interviewees saw the Citizen Channel project as belonging to a larger group of similar projects and political initiatives. These included other projects that were implemented simultaneously, along with earlier project ideas and later projects that could be seen as predecessors or sequels to Citizen Channel (cf. Boltanski & Chiapello 1999, 158). The interviewees presented a number of projects for which a relationship with Citizen Channel might be assumed. However, it depended on the background of the interviewee which projects and initiatives he or she saw as related. This is logical because of the networked nature of projects, or as Kivelä et al. (2007, 19) put it, behind project networks, there are numerous “networks of networks” between other organisations, institutions and forms of expertise. This affects both the experiences and forms of knowledge that actors bring to the project and the ways in which they disseminate the results of the project after it has ended. The continuity and

intertwining of various projects is described in the following interview extracts with the project administration.

There are lots of projects that are acting in the same area, some overlapping and some not, and it's good to have collaboration between them, so that projects have [collaboration] with each other. Then you can divide and deal things out a bit so that you do more of this, we do more of that so that we don't do the same thing.

Project administration, NGO or other association

Well, it is a long continuum; you can't imagine that Citizen Channel has started from a void and ended in a void, but it has been a part of a development trajectory.

Project administration, municipality

The interviewee from the broad project administration (including the steering and management groups) mentioned several projects and initiatives starting from the early 1980s which had dealt with the themes of urban development and citizen participation. These included the Sofy project of the early 1980s concentrating on social and physical development; the international Healthy Cities work; the EU's URBAN Community Initiative; the development of neighbourhood home pages by Helka; and the KaKe (*Kaupunginosien kehittämisverkosto*) project carried out under the previous Urban Programme. Projects and initiatives going on at the same time included the national government's Citizen Participation Policy Programme and an EU-funded project named Innovative Cities for the Next Generation (ICING).

After Citizen Channel, Helka started cooperating with other project partners on an EU-funded Interreg project called "Creating attractive developed and dynamic societies together with the inhabitants" (CADDIES), which also involved the cities of Norrköping in Sweden and Riga in Latvia. Interestingly, this project included a theme that had been central in the development phase of the Citizen Channel project – the idea of inhabitants visioning the future – but which was side-lined by that of creating participatory tools as the project went on. Even more recently, Helka has been conducting a project on local development groups (KEHRÄ) where it acts as an intermediary organisation between residents' development projects and project funding, according to much the same logic as in the LEADER-type projects in rural development (see Paikallisen kehittämisen toimintamalli ja paikallinen kehittämispolku Helsingissä -ehdotus, Helsingin paikallinen kehittämispolku (STAKE)).

According to the interviews, the findings of the Citizen Channel project were also useful in a democracy-oriented project carried out as part of the Urban Programme 2008–2010, where the idea was to create democracy indicators for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. In 2013 the city of Helsinki went on to fund its Democracy Pilots – bottom-up projects aimed at developing

local democracy, some of which were conducted in the same neighbourhoods as the Citizen Channel project. At the time of the interviews, the Association of Finnish Local and Democratic Authorities was itself planning a research project on municipal mergers between rural and urban areas in which they planned to use the toolbox created in the Citizen Channel project, and they presented the results of the project in their annual event for Finnish municipalities. In 2015, the results of Citizen Channel were still available on the Internet pages of the Helsinki Region, Helka and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities.

As was noted, Pinson (2009) uses the concept of “metaproject” to describe the horizons, principles and policy discourses which form a framework for individual projects. However, in the analysis by Pinson, a metaproject has elements in common with strategic steering, in the conscious effort of political actors to create a framework for individual projects. In my case study, the distance from the strategic priorities of the Urban Programme to the Citizen Channel project was relatively long, resulting at the project level in a limited amount of knowledge and explicit reinterpretations of the objectives of the programme. The metaproject in my study was a far more complex entity of projects, networks and actors, not steered in a top-down way but rather emanating from the world of projects, one in which a variety of project actors interact with each other, create new linkages and start new projects. This metaproject does nevertheless have a linkage to public policies. It is through public funding and contacts to the public administration that these projects are enabled. From the viewpoint of the public administration, these projects serve as a way of contracting out some of their tasks, broadening the sphere of actors implementing public policies and possibly generating new perspectives for their development, in line with the general logic of governance. What may be seen as a risk in such a “chaotic” metaproject, however, is that it remains constantly outside the regular public administration and forms a parallel world which does not have an impact on the functioning of public administration.

Some interviewees saw that the relationships between projects and the permanent administration and those between the various projects could be developed through better coordination. One possible solution, presented by some interviewees, would be the introduction of local coordinators at a neighbourhood or a broader sub-municipal area level. Some variants of this form of action currently exist in Finnish cities either as a more general position or within a specific policy field. The interviewees, while recognising the importance of allocating public resources to this form of action and frequently advocating that the city invest in it, also mentioned a potential role for local associations as local coordinators.

This programme- and project-based thing is all right, but in parallel you need some kind of continuity, something which these projects attach to and something that can mediate these practices so that they remain alive. For instance one [form] that has been implemented in

some cities is to target human resources at coordination at the local level. (...) I think it would help to collect information. Projects would support each other and know about each other's existence.

Project administration, NGO or other association

As has been noted in this study, the views of the interviewees on projects as a form of action were quite divided. Especially among the Urban Programme management group, programmes and projects were seen as a way to enhance collaboration, and to test and trial new ideas in public administration. Within the project administration, although the short-term nature of individual projects often seemed challenging and frustrating, many of the interviewees nevertheless maintained a relatively optimistic view of the impact of projects as a whole. Even though they saw that the effect of a single project was meagre and its impact limited to the short-term, they emphasised that a multiplicity of projects going in the same direction could make a difference in the long term. As the following citation shows, interviewees from the project administration saw that changes in the organisational culture of municipalities were slow and that Citizen Channel was only one part of a larger continuum of participatory initiatives which may gradually have an impact. Similarly, the interim evaluation of the Urban Programme 2005–2007 (Uusikylä et al. 2007) concluded that the implementation of the results of the Citizen Channel project as such was unrealistic but it was nevertheless laying the foundations for further work in the future.

With one project you do not usually make very big changes, however much you got in the way of good and practicable ideas. The challenge is rather that it takes time for people to adopt new models and ways of action, so one project seldom gets big things rooted in. Development is a long process where you proceed one step at a time. It seems as if nowadays you have to specify your results right after the project has finished, even if it would be better to review them after a long time.

Project administration, NGO or other association

Although the aim of the Citizen Channel project was not to promote concrete political issues, the project itself was seen in several interviews as a way to get the issue of participation higher up municipalities' political agendas. Here, the logic of the interviewees was opposed to the notion of participation as contracting out public services to the third sector. On the contrary, the interviewees saw participation as being promoted vis-à-vis the public administration by the actors in these participatory projects. Even though according to the existing literature, much of the current "participatory turn" is directed from the side of public administration, this case study showed a slightly different picture – at least in the way in which the project actors themselves presented the issue of participation. According to this logic, the drivers of the "participatory turn" did not come from the upper-level

administration. While the upper-level municipal officials in the Urban Programme and in the management group of the Citizen Channel project had in principle a relatively positive view of the development of citizen participation, the issue of participation was of secondary importance in the framework of metropolitan development. At the same time, the development of participation was not the result of direct grassroots-level action by resident activists either; they were concentrating on concrete issues in their neighbourhoods, not on the question of developing participation.

In this case, the thrust for developing participation could be seen as coming primarily *from the meso level of project administration* – including NGOs such as Helka and other local level associations, together with street-level municipal officials working with the issues of participation in their everyday work. For them, as was noted, the development of participation was a professional issue and provided them with the prospect of work on further participatory projects in an increasingly project-based society. In a more recent publication, Helka's manager relates the role of the organisation in the development of participation to the "peer-based" production of public services (Tulikukka 2012). However, it must be noted that these project actors are "professional idealists" (Tranvik & Selle 2008, see also Matthies 2000) who believe in their cause much in the same way as the group of practitioners and scholars working in the fields of deliberative democracy and interpretive policy analysis. This conception of the Citizen Channel project as an attempt to change the societal culture and to push ideas into the domain of decision-making is present in the following citation from the broader project administration.

And in that way I am actually not worried even if often there is kind of work going on at the same time on these [participatory projects], because the aim is to change the culture of our society and the more we do this kind of thing, the more the culture changes. So in this field there is no worry even if we would do overlapping work. And in a way this Citizen Channel discussion that we had quite soon got going in many places besides Citizen Channel.

Project administration, municipality

In earlier literature, citizen participation and deliberation have been seen as a way to render issues publicly visible and thereby try to get them onto the political agenda (Marres 2007, 761). This does not to be a conflictual form of advocacy, as for instance the descriptions of the role of voluntary organisations in the building phase of Nordic welfare states shows. In an analysis of Norwegian voluntary organisations, Eikås and Selle (2003, 108) point out that in the early days of the welfare state project associations had a very pragmatic and non-confrontational relationship with the state. However, they had "a profound ideological influence on public policy in the welfare area, that is the shift from private to public responsibility, and have often served as pioneers

in the institutionalization of new forms of social services". There are similar descriptions of associations providing services which have little by little been delegated to the state in other Nordic countries, including Finland (Alapuro & Stenius 1987, Rothstein 2003, Götz & Hackmann 2003).

The question is whether participatory projects can also have an influence in getting the issue of participation onto the political agenda and effect its institutionalisation in public policies. In earlier literature, there are a few examples of projects that have actively contributed to societal change. In practice, this has meant a multitude of projects that have little by little led to more established forms of action. In their study, Boltanski and Chiapello (1999, 429–435, 490) use the example of the new humanitarian movement in France that arose in mid-1980s and included former activists disillusioned with formal politics. These actors were actively working in a variety of "hands-on" grassroots projects targeted at preventing new forms of social exclusion. From the 1990s, these projects were to a growing extent realised with public funding through partnerships between grassroots associations and the state, municipal officials and social workers – together with other actors such as employment agencies, educational institutes and social enterprises. Boltanski and Chiapello see this fabric of projects and social movements as a big factor in the process through which the issue of social exclusion became politicised and came onto the political agenda in France during the 1990s, with the activation of new voices such as high-level public officials, lawyers, economists, sociologists, confessional organisations and new types of social movements, leading finally to the promulgation of a law on income support.

Nonjon (2012) sees a similar – and *de facto* interconnected – development in the issue of urban participation in France, which in French urban policy is strongly related to the prevention of social exclusion (see e.g. Kuokkanen 2005). In the 1970s and 1980s, several former activists were carrying out a form of action research in a number of French cities and neighbourhoods the aim of which was to create opportunities for local residents to meet and discuss. For instance, Nonjon's description of the career of Marie-Claire, an emblematic former activist who became a professional participation consultant, demonstrates the existence of sequential fixed-term projects. These projects were funded from various programmes, often with money from the state, and usually involved experimentation with citizen participation at the neighbourhood level. According to Nonjon, the 1980s marked a profound change for the field of urban participation in France. At that time, neighbourhood-level participation became an institutionalised part of national urban policy, which gradually got under way during the decade. During the 1990s and 2000s, the institutionalisation of neighbourhood-level development become more strongly intertwined with the "participatory turn" of public policies and the modernisation of public administration, where consultants were to find themselves playing an increasingly important role.

Earlier research has shown that the processes of politicisation differ considerably between France and Finland (Luhtakallio 2010) and it is difficult

to draw conclusions from French cases in the Finnish context. According to the analysis by Kristiina Brunila (2009) on Finnish gender equality work, the adoption of a project-based form of action (what she calls “projectisation” and in this study, is referred to as “projectification”) has enjoyed some form of continuity despite or even because of the project form. For the implementers of the projects, securing continuity in the project world requires competence, the adoption of the “managerial logic” of project work, a certain form of discourse, and an alliance with the public actors (see also Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009). Brunila sees that project-based equality work, although being mainly teaching, training and research, is at the same time a form of political influencing. The very persistence of gender equality problems, the collaboration of the actors and the forms of discourse they have learnt in their work have opened up opportunities for change.

All in all, the impact and continuity of the Citizen Channel project – and those of participatory projects in general – remain ambivalent according to this study. Individual projects end and at the grassroots level, this easily results in frustration for the participants. However, it is evident that at the level of project administration, there is a certain continuity, as a multitude of projects are implemented simultaneously and sequentially. The effect of this metaproject on the permanent municipal administration remains ambivalent. From a pessimistic perspective, projects serve as a way to contract out the issue of participation from the public administration to NGOs and participatory projects, which follow one another without having an effect on the permanent administration. However, from a more optimistic perspective, participatory projects emanate from the meso level of NGO and grassroots-level municipal officials working with issues of participation and they can little by little have a more general impact on the functioning of the permanent municipal administration. Even though the results of an individual project remain limited, the perspective should extend to take in on the whole multitude of simultaneous and sequential projects, which may gradually serve to effect change in established practices.

7.4 SUMMING UP: THE CHALLENGES OF PROJECT-BASED DEVELOPMENT OF PARTICIPATION

According to the analysis, projectification leads to new forms of professionalism and intermediary organisations. This professionalism does not only include practical knowledge on project management, but also in the case of citizen participation, both academic and practical knowledge on “how to make people participate” or in other words, “field capital” from the grassroots level (Nonjon 2005, 2012). NGOs in particular are seen as having knowledge of this because of their links “to the field” through their members. However, the professionals in participation are a broader group of actors, as for instance the role of the street-level officials in the steering group of the

Citizen Channel project indicates. Similarly, the project managers of EU-funded participatory projects implemented in Finland represent various organisations such as educational institutions, NGOs and municipalities (Kuokkanen forthcoming a). In France, the research by Nonjon (2005, 2012) has shown that alongside NGOs and individual activists, urban research bureaus can exhibit this same professionalism. This study clearly demonstrates that NGOs display many of the qualities required of professionals in participation, as the role of Helka in Citizen Channel shows. At the same time, NGOs implementing projects act as intermediary organisations between the public administration and the grassroots level. The active role of associations in the implementation of public policies has been related to collaborative and networked forms of governance and to the stakeholder ideology of project management (see Chapter 2). Even though this form of action is typical of countries with a tradition of corporatism, consultation, and certain public functions delegated to the third sector, earlier research has shown the rise of a new group of intermediary organisations as an aspect of governance (Kuokkanen 2004, Kuokkanen & Vihinen 2009, Munro et al. 2008, Nonjon 2012). Projects in particular require new forms of action such as the creation and maintenance of networks and the building of trust in them. My interviews showed a gradual change in the role of Helka since the late 1990s or early 2000s and an explicit strategy to profile itself as an expert in projects and participation and as an intermediary organisation. The “field capital” of an organisation (Nonjon 2005, Nonjon 2012), i.e. its relationships in and knowledge of the “field”, acts as a further resource in building its credibility.

However, the role of the actual participants in development-oriented participatory projects remains limited, as with with some of the pessimistic findings in the earlier literature (Paddison 2009, Geddes 2000, Nonjon 2005, Nonjon 2012). In projects aimed at developing participation, there is a need for the generalisation, modelling and transferability of the results (Nonjon 2005, Nonjon 2012), which leaves little scope for meeting the immediate demands of the participants. At the same time, the project administration set out the rationalities of the project just as the public sector has done in earlier participatory schemes organised by public authorities described in the literature (e.g. Flyvbjerg 1998, Leino 2006). From a pessimistic perspective, the “big ones” or the well networked actors, usually project managers and their organisations, have the opportunity to move on to new projects, whereas the “small ones” remain immobile after the project has ended (see also Boltanski & Chiapello 1999). However, there is also the possibility of a more optimistic interpretation. Despite the tendency to create models at the level of the project administration, there is a parallel development of networks, practices and forms of action at the grassroots level. From an optimistic perspective, projects do leave new forms of action, practices, networks, innovations and other small-scale and tacit results at the local level even after the project funding has finished.

According to this study, individual projects are always situated in a broader network of simultaneous and sequential projects, which can be called a “metaproject” (Pinson 2009). The project managers and the central stakeholders in individual projects are particularly likely to continue in other projects after the project funding has finished. However, the impact of such metaprojects on the public administration remains ambivalent. From a pessimistic perspective, the metaproject is a way to contract out public services to NGO-run projects which have a certain degree of continuity but little impact on the permanent institutions of public administration. However, from a more optimistic perspective, the network of projects emanates from grassroots practitioners, both NGOs and street-level municipal officials, and it can over time have an impact on the functioning of the permanent institutions of the public administration. According to the existing research literature, this is visible for instance in the French case on social exclusion (Boltanski & Chiapello 1999) and, to some extent, citizen participation (Nonjon 2005, 2012). The issue of citizen participation in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area is a more recent phenomenon than the issues of social exclusion and neighbourhood participation in France. As was noted, the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki region is still in the formulation phase. What the role of projects such as Citizen Channel might be in developing participation in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area or more generally is difficult to assess. At the moment, the metropolitan policy of the Helsinki Region is in a period of transition and it is relatively conflictual as a political issue.

It is difficult to say how much earlier participatory projects will have influenced the alternatives that are presented if there is a shift towards more intensified metropolitan cooperation. However, in general, during the 2000s (and even after my interviews conducted in 2008 and 2009), in the Finnish municipal and national administration, the issue of participation and democracy policy has been growing considerably both as a cross-cutting theme and within a number of policy fields (see Chapter 3.1). Even though many of the participatory projects have had problems in the implementation of their results, there are at the same time processes where new forms of citizen participation in public administration are being created, established and institutionalised, alongside a parallel development in citizen- and association-based initiatives, networks and forms of action (e.g. Hernberg 2012, Alatalo 2015, Mäenpää & Faehnle 2015, Willman 2015).

The next chapter consists of the conclusions of this study. These include, first, the contribution of this study to the research on governance and metagovernance especially in programme- and project-based urban and metropolitan policies. Second, the results with respect to the development of participation and more precisely, metropolitan participation will be addressed. Third, the contribution of this study to the issue of projectification of public policies and, more specifically, of the development of participation will be assessed.

8 CONCLUSION: IS THERE SUPPORT FOR THE PESSIMISTIC OR OPTIMISTIC PERSPECTIVE ON GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY?

The conclusions of this study concentrate on three interrelated themes. The first is the issue of governance and metagovernance, especially in programme- and project-based urban and metropolitan policies. The second is the development of participation by public authorities and closely related “professionals in participation” and the special case of developing metropolitan participation. The third is the projectification of public policies and more specifically, of the development of participation through projects.

My empirical analysis leads to a number of conclusions from the perspective of *governance and metagovernance*. In this study, I have analysed a participatory project which was situated inside a broader policy or development programme. The Urban Programme was a development and collaboration programme for the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and some other actors (such as the state and regional authorities), whereas the aim of the Citizen Channel project was to try, test and model different forms of participation and interaction between citizens and public authorities in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.

According to this study, the entity formed by the Urban Programme, the Citizen Channel project administration and the project participants encompassed a range of working logics, interests and actors, resulting in a corresponding divergence in attitudes within the group to the project itself and to the issue of participation. The Urban Programme mainly centred on creating collaboration between municipal officials and on the issue of competitiveness. In the programme, citizen participation was merely a theme – and a secondary theme at that, compared to the “hard” targets of competitiveness and the more tacit objectives of networking and consensus-building. However, it can be argued that the inclusion of the Citizen Channel project in the programme could serve to enhance its democratic legitimacy by introducing a participatory project, conducted by an NGO – themes that had been present in the official programming documents of the programme but had found little expression elsewhere.

For Helka and the other actors in the Citizen Channel project, funding from the Urban Programme enabled the realisation of an ambitious project that had been planned for several years. However, they had to frame their ideas in a way that fitted into the framework of the programme, which in the Urban Programme meant first and foremost the super discourse of competitiveness, supplemented with the metropolitan dimension. The participants in the project, which could be seen as examples of “active citizens”, emphasised

concrete local issues and the creation of new networks and were not necessarily aware of the broader objectives of the project. The roles of the actors are quite similar to those presented in earlier research (Skelcher et al. 2013, 22): strategic and distant politicians or metagovernors; strong non-elected officials; and active citizens in interaction with politicians (or as in this case, with non-elected officials). Here, what is of interest in this study is the role of the project administration, as we see the rise of a new group of professional NGOs and project organisers that work as experts and intermediary organisations at the same time as citizen participation is shifting towards something that is developed, tested and modelled.

From the perspective of metagovernance, the role of elected politicians in the process remained modest. The Urban Programme was based on the strong role of non-elected municipal officials, yet with a parallel development of collaboration between elected officials (such as the establishment of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Advisory Board) and links to the strategic steering of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.

The study shows that strategic steering, which is the cornerstone of programmatic development and one of the most important forms of metagovernance by elected politicians, is a relatively loose framework that allows various interpretations of its leading strategies and visions. The Urban Programme was subordinate to the vision of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area as a site for urban competitiveness, which was also visible in the discourse at the project level. However, in practice, the project administration re-interpreted the idea of competitiveness so that it served the needs of the project, while the participants in the project were not even aware of this discursive framework. At the same time, the relatively loose framework and shifting priorities of the Citizen Channel project question the idea of the “hyper-rationality” (e.g. Sjöblom et al. 2013, 3) of projects as presented in the project management literature.

At the same time, both the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project are compatible with the literature on the more tacit results of public sector programmes and projects such as the creation of networks and collaboration, the mobilisation of new actors, the opportunity to try and test new things, and the symbolic importance of creating common programmes and projects in a certain policy field. For innovativeness in projects, broad room for manoeuvre for individual projects can be a good thing. More generally, it can be seen as an indicator of the “politicisation” of the policy level, leading to re-interpretations of the prevailing upper-level discourses and ideologies, as presented in some of the existing governance literature (Häikiö & Leino 2014c).

In the light of the results of this study, a strict division between “government” and “governance” is not a fruitful approach. The Urban Programme in particular was an example of networking between high-level municipal officials which have traditionally belonged to the field of “government”. At the same time, the actors involved in the programme

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administration emphasised the difference between programme-based work and traditional public administration, especially in the way in which the Urban Programme enabled the creation of networks, consensus and new forms of action. The research agenda of so-called third-generation governance studies – concentrating on the hybridity of governance, issues of democracy, metagovernance and critical, interpretive and contextual studies – gives a good starting point for the analysis of programmes and projects. The aim of third generation studies to concentrate on various groups present in governance arrangements is also a fruitful approach. As this study has shown, the picture is different depending on whether the perspective is at the level of programme networks, project administration or project participants.

The second theme in this research concerned *the development of participation* by public authorities and related actors – in other words, the “participatory turn” of public administration. In the development of participation, there are several, partly overlapping and partly contradictory expectations. Especially in the development of local, neighbourhood-level participation, the main drivers for the development of participation are the issues of local or near democracy, the (local) knowledge of the citizens both as residents and as users of public services and the development and modernisation of public administration and the quality of decision-making. Although these three dimensions are seen as reinforcing each other to some degree, there are also controversies. If the voice of the citizen is seen as a democratic issue, more importance should be attached to its representativeness. A counter-argument is that if the voice of the citizen is regarded as a form of local knowledge or a tool for presenting “good ideas” to the administration, the issue of representativeness is less important, as ultimate decision-making stays in the hands of elected politicians and, to some extent, non-elected municipal officials such as planners who draw their legitimacy from the elected institutions.

In the development of participation, there are other challenges and problems. These relate both to the role of public administration vis-à-vis the citizens, such as the low level of resources allocated to issues of participation and the limited impact of participatory procedures, and to the role of the citizens in the participatory processes, such as issues of representativeness, competence and motivation. One challenge concerns the various forms that (local) participation and its development can take – through individuals, associations or institutional semi-representative structures such as neighbourhood councils, or existing sub-municipal structures such as local committees. At the same time, citizen participation or more precisely, resident and neighbourhood participation, is seen as being in a process of change because of the new opportunities provided by information and communication technology and because of the forms of action that the younger generation is in the process of adopting. Open questions on the development of participation are the combination of top-down forms of participatory initiatives and free forms of citizen mobilisation, the plurality of the citizens

participating and role of representative institutions in these processes. A general question concerns the relationship between the various actors – citizens or residents, elected politicians and non-elected administration – and ultimately, the relation between representative and participatory democracy.

The issue of *metropolitan participation* is particularly difficult, as there is an “institutional void” (Hajer 2003b) which means that there are no commonly approved norms and practices for it. At the grassroots level, the main driver for those forms of participation that transcend municipal boundaries is the “metropolitan dimension of everyday life” for residents – something that is independent of administrative borders. There is a need to think about municipal services and their organisation from a perspective which rises above municipal borders. However, it must be noted that acknowledging the “metropolitan dimension of everyday life” does not automatically imply support for institutionalised forms of metropolitan governance such as municipal mergers or metropolitan-level institutions; street-level officials, neighbourhood associations and resident activists are divided on the issue. The question of local or “near” democracy – defined as the possibility to influence the near environment – is important for these actors, and it is feared that consolidation of metropolitan structures will shift power away from the local level. At the same time, the development of information and communication technology is creating new forms and channels of participation which are no longer bound to a particular place.

In the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, a specific problem in the development of metropolitan participation is that the four municipalities of the area have different administrative cultures and forms of organisation for resident participation and even to some extent different “participatory cultures”. The metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region is still in a transition phase, which has complicated the development of metropolitan participation. Until recently, the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region has followed a trajectory from competition and limited forms of collaboration to governance networks and programmatic steering, and during the last few years, towards more institutionalised forms of metropolitan governance (or at least there has been growing pressure from state level for institutional consolidation). However, the issue of metropolitan governance is highly conflictual, a fact which was also present in the background to this study.

The project-based development of participation has its own challenges, which relate in part to the limited time frame and need for a special form of expertise that the project form requires. The findings of this study are more nuanced than the most optimistic views on participation and deliberation (see Chapter 2.3). However, there is a possibility for both a pessimistic and an optimistic interpretation of the results on the inclusiveness and impact of the Citizen Channel project and participatory projects more generally.

From a pessimistic perspective, the development of participation through projects leads to its instrumentalisation and a post-political form of it. A new group of professionals in participation has arisen, one that follows managerial

project logic and prevailing political discourses in order to secure funding (cf. Brunila 2009, Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009). For participatory projects, this means using the discourse of urban competitiveness even in the field of citizen participation. At the same time, participatory projects concentrate on creating generalizable and transferable models of participation instead of using participation to actually influence political decision-making (cf. Nonjon 2005, 2012). For the participants in such projects, there is a relatively little room for manoeuvre, as the rationalities for the projects are ultimately defined by the project administration (which is, in turn, delimited by the prevailing political discourses). Moreover, for the participants, there is little continuity after the project funding has ended, even if the project administration can move on to new projects. From a pessimistic perspective, projects have little impact on the functioning of the public administration. They are rather a way to outsource the issue of participation to NGOs and projects that have no impact on the permanent organisations of public administration.

From an optimistic perspective, governance and projectification give new scope to NGOs and other local development actors. The study showed that an NGO could have a role as a professional actor, both as a project organiser and an expert in participation. Moreover, it was able to act as an intermediary organisation between the public administration and the grassroots level and between a short-term project and long-term effects such as the creation of networks and the building of trust. Even though NGOs act according to the project logic, projects support their basic values and objectives such as the interest in developing citizen participation (cf. Brunila 2009, Tranvik & Selle 2008). At the same time, the upper-level discursive framework – in this case, urban competitiveness – has little impact on the actual functioning of such projects. The main thrust for participatory projects comes from the meso level of project administration including both NGOs and street-level municipal officials working with the issues of participation in their everyday work. The fact that NGOs come from outside the public sector affords them the opportunity to present new ideas and alternative ways of thinking (cf. Luomala 2003, Sulkunen 2006, 27). From the viewpoint of citizens participating, even though individual projects end, they lead to the creation of networks, new forms of action and other tacit results at the local level. In the longer term, even if the impact of individual projects is limited, the networks of projects can little by little have an effect on the permanent institutions of public administration more generally.

These pessimistic and optimistic interpretations illustrate processes both of depoliticisation – the role of the Urban Programme as “not a tool for doing politics”, the issue of citizen participation as a development object – and, to a much lesser extent, of repoliticisation – reinterpretations of leading strategies at policy level, the promotion of the issue of participation through projects. Both processes have been presented as ongoing trends in the literature on governance and interpretive policy analysis (see Chapters 2.3 and 4.1). At the same time, these processes are tied up with the dialectic of consensus and

conflict which has characterised the literature on (urban) participation since the 1960s (Le Galès 2002, see also Chapters 2.3 and 2.5). In both the Urban Programme and Citizen Channel project, the main emphasis was on the idea of “non-political” – in other words, depoliticised – development work, both in the field of metropolitan governance and in the development of participation.

Similarly, both the Urban Programme and the Citizen Channel project were examples of consensual forms of policy-making. In the context of the Urban Programme, this meant a consensual “island” inside a conflictual policy field, namely the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region. It can be said that this form of consensus was needed in order to prepare the ground for further metropolitan collaboration. In Citizen Channel, however, as in many other participatory initiatives, the question is whether there was a place for conflict and diverging opinions. The project acted according to a very consensual logic and in some of the interviews, conflictual forms of participation were not seen as fitting into its framework (see also Pinson 2009, Paddison 2009). Meanwhile, it has been stated that researchers concentrating on participatory processes developed by the public administration and related actors tend to become myopic and leave the field of social movements outside their analysis, where a broader repertoire of participation is deployed (Häikiö & Leino 2014a). However, because of the Finnish culture of consensus, even Finnish activists tend to constantly return to a “peaceful *status quo*” instead of long-term conflict – in contrast for instance to their French counterparts (Luhtakallio 2010). This is, in turn, related to the ways in which issues become politicised in these societies.

It is difficult to assess the impact of the Citizen Channel project on the functioning of public administration or on the political alternatives for metropolitan participation, as the metropolitan governance of the Helsinki Region is in a period of flux. The Urban Programmes have been the first steps in the development of metropolitan governance specifically through the creation of consensus and collaboration. However, it is still difficult to say what forms citizen participation will take in the future especially in the context of metropolitan governance, and what will have been the impact of earlier projects like Citizen Channel. What was evident both in the interviews and in the ongoing political debate is the complexity and conflictuality around the issue of metropolitan governance in the Helsinki Region.

In general, the “participatory turn” of public administration has been intensifying, at least until recently. Since the early 2000s – and even more after my interviews were conducted in 2008 and early 2009 – the issue of participation has been strongly present in the Finnish municipal and national administration both as a cross-cutting theme and within several policy fields. Even though many of the participatory projects have had problems in the implementation of their results as in the case of Citizen Channel, there are ongoing processes to create, establish, and institutionalise forms of citizen participation in the public administration. Moreover, there is a parallel development of citizen- or association-based initiatives, networks and new

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forms of action outside public institutions (e.g. Hernberg 2012, Alatalo 2015, Mäenpää & Faehnle 2015 Willman 2015).

However, in 2015 the biggest political issues facing Finnish society have been, first, the austerity measures affecting the public administration and, second, an increasing polarisation of Finnish society especially around the issues of immigration, European integration and minorities (Westinen 2015). How these issues will affect the field of participation remains open. It is possible that the austerity measures will impact the resources available for developing participation in both the public and the third sectors. As was noted in Chapter 5.1, issues of participation are easily seen as “soft fluff” when compared to the “hard” target of competitiveness, and the issue of competitiveness acts as a super discourse to which that of participation is subordinate. At the same time, the previous economic depression of the 1990s placed high hopes in the capacity of the third-sector to co-produce services, provide jobs and enhance the employability of vulnerable groups (e.g. Siisiäinen et al. 2000, Kuokkanen 2004). Recently, there has been a rise in voluntary work across various fields, especially around the recently arrived asylum seekers (see Helsingin Sanomat: Vapaaehtoistyö).

Second, the recent polarisation of Finnish society has also had an impact on Finnish democracy, especially its claimed consensual culture (see Chapter 3.1). It can even be speculated that recent developments will have an effect on the trust that the citizens feel towards the system. In the development of participatory measures, this means a higher probability of conflict. Many of the participatory measures – and active citizenship in general – often include elements of elitism, favouring better-off groups in society (with the exception of “Empowerment Projects” targeted specifically at vulnerable groups, see Eliasoph 2011, Kuokkanen forthcoming a). In the development of participation, there is indeed a need to take into account excluded and marginalised groups – including the growing number of immigrants – and their capacity to use the existing channels of participation.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW THEMES (URBAN PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT GROUP)

Background and role of the interviewee

- The background of the actor
- What the actor has concretely done in the Urban Programme?
- Was the actor involved in the previous programming period? Has the actor been involved in the projects implemented in the programme

Preparation for the Urban Programme (if the actor was involved)

- Where did the initiative come from? Who were involved in the preparation? Who was consulted? How was the programme written after that?
- How were the project proposals collected? How were the projects chosen? How were the actors appointed to the Urban Programme management group and to the projects' steering and management groups?

Decision-making in the Urban Programme

- How does decision-making in the Urban Programme function?
- What links are there to municipal administration, representative institutions, stakeholders (including Helka as an NGO)?
- Has the programme work been consensual? Have there been conflicts? Has the Urban Programme enhanced networking between various actors?

The objectives of urban or metropolitan policy and the Urban Programme

- What is the most important objective of urban policy/ the Urban Programme according to the interviewee?
- The official objective of the Urban Programme was to develop the international competitiveness of the Helsinki Region. How was this objective concretised at the project level? How does the development of participation tie into this objective? (Is there a difference in the objectives of the programme compared with those of the previous programming period?)
- Is the theme of participation important in the context of urban/ metropolitan policy/ in the Urban Programme?

Participatory projects

- What were the experiences from the Citizen Channel project? What was successful, what was problematic? What has remained from the project?

- How was the action affected by the fact that the project was conducted by Helka (a third sector organization, cf. the other projects of the Urban Programme)?
- Has the theme of participation been present in other projects?

The general development of the Helsinki Region and participation

- Views on the development of the urban/ metropolitan policy of the region?
(More detailed questions if needed: Are programmes and projects adequate tools? Is there a need for more established institutions and practices? What issues should be addressed at the metropolitan level?)
- Views on the development of participation?
(More detailed questions if needed: What is the most important level of participation – municipality, neighbourhood, metropolitan level? Is there a need for metropolitan forms of participation? Are there issues where direct participation is especially suitable? Are programmes and projects a good way to deal with participation (cf. more established institutions and practices)?)

The current and the next programming period

- What has been the most central achievement in this programming period? What was successful, what was problematic?
- Is the actor involved in the Urban Programme 2008–2010, in the development of the national metropolitan policy or in the preparation of the Regional Cohesion and Competitiveness (CoCo) Programme? (Extra questions about them)

Finally

- Is there still something that the interviewee wants to discuss/ was there something essential that was not covered in the interview?
- Who else should I interview?

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW THEMES (CITIZEN CHANNEL PROJECT ADMINISTRATION)

Background and role of the interviewee

- The background of the actor
- What the actor has concretely done in the Citizen Channel project
- If involved in Helka: Can the actor talk about the activities of Helka? Have there been other similar projects?

Citizen Channel

- Can the actor talk about the project as much as possible: what has been done during the project etc.?
- What has remained from the project? What was successful, what was problematic?
- Was the actor involved in the preparation of the project? (If yes: Where did the initiative come from? How it was prepared? Who were involved?)
- How were the actors chosen for the management and steering groups? How did decision-making function in the project?
- Who was the target group/ who were the participants in the project? Was it easy to get people involved? What was the role of local neighbourhood associations? How about individual residents? The organization of activities: who decided/ defined them?
- Was the emphasis on participation in the current situation or on the development of future forms of participation? How was it presented to the resident actors?
- How have the results of the project been carried forward?
- How much did the project enhance networking between various actors? (With which actors has the project created contacts?)
- Were there controversies in the objectives, wishes, interests etc. of the various actors?
- How did the project keep in contact with the Urban Programme? How was the action affected by the fact that the project was conducted by Helka (a third sector organization, cf. the other projects of the Urban Programme)?

The objectives of urban or metropolitan policy and the Urban Programme

- What is the most important objective of urban policy/ the Urban Programme according to the interviewee?
- The official objective of the Urban Programme was to develop the international competitiveness of the Helsinki Region. How was this objective concretised at the project level? (How does the development of participation tie into this objective?)

- Is the theme of participation important in the context of urban/ metropolitan policy/in the Urban Programme?

The general development of the Helsinki Region and participation

- Views on the development of the urban/ metropolitan policy of the region
(More detailed questions if needed: Are programmes and projects adequate tools? Is there a need for more established institutions and practices? What issues should be addressed at the metropolitan level?)
- Views on the development of participation
(More detailed questions if needed: What is the most important level of participation – municipality, neighbourhood, metropolitan level? Is there a need for metropolitan forms of participation? Are there issues where direct participation is especially suitable? Are programmes and projects a good way to deal with participation (cf. more established institutions and practices)?)

Finally

- Is there still something that the interviewee wants to discuss/ was there something essential that was not covered in the interview?
- Who else should I interview?

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW THEMES (NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION ACTIVISTS)

Background and role of the interviewee

- The background of the actor
- What the actor has concretely done in the Citizen Channel project

Citizen Channel

- How did the actor get involved in the project?
- How was the project presented to the inhabitant actors?
- What were the experiences from the project? What was successful, what was problematic? What has remained from the project?
- The organization of activities in the project: who decided/defined them?
- How much did the project enhance networking between various actors? (With which actors did the library create contacts?)
- Were there controversies in the objectives, wishes, interests etc. of the various actors?
- Has the actor been involved in similar projects earlier?
- Is the actor otherwise active in associations, politics etc.?

The objectives of urban policy and the Urban Programme

- Have you followed the Urban Programme? (the following questions asked only if yes)
- (What is the most important objective of urban policy/ the Urban Programme according to the interviewee?)
- The official objective of the Urban Programme was to develop the international competitiveness of the Helsinki Region. How was this objective concretised at the project level? How does the development of participation tie into this objective?
- Is the theme of participation important in the context of urban policy/ in the Urban Programme?)

The general development of the Helsinki Region and participation

- Views on the development of the urban/ metropolitan policy of the region
(More detailed questions if needed: What is the most important level of participation – municipality, neighbourhood, metropolitan level? Is there a need for metropolitan forms of participation? Are there issues where direct participation is especially suitable? Are programmes and projects a good way to deal with participation (cf. more established institutions and practices)?)
- Views on the development of participation
(More detailed questions if needed: What is the most important level of participation – municipality, neighbourhood, metropolitan level? Is

there a need for metropolitan forms of participation? Are there issues where direct participation is especially suitable? Are programmes and projects a good way to deal with participation (cf. more established institutions and practices)?

Finally

- Is there still something that the interviewee wants to discuss/ was there something essential that was not covered in the interview?
- Who else should I interview?

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW THEMES (LIBRARIANS)

Background and role of the interviewee

- The background of the actor
- What the actor has concretely done in the Citizen Channel project

Citizen Channel

- Can the actor talk about the library part of the project as much as possible: what has been done during the project etc.?
- What has remained from the project? What was successful, what was problematic?
- How did the actor get involved in the project? (Was the actor involved in the preparation of the project?)
- Who was the target group/ who were the participants in the project? Was it easy to get people involved? The organization of activities: who decided/defined them?
- Was the emphasis on participation in the current situation or on the development of future forms of participation?
- How have the results of the project been advanced in the library?
- How much did the project enhance networking between various actors? (With which actors did the library create contacts?)
- Were there controversies in the objectives, wishes, interests etc. of the various actors?
- Has the actor been involved in similar projects earlier? Has the library had similar activities otherwise?

The objectives of urban policy and the Urban Programme

- Have you followed the Urban Programme? (the following questions asked only if yes)
- What is the most important objective of urban policy/ the Urban Programme according to the interviewee?
- The official objective of the Urban Programme was to develop the international competitiveness of the Helsinki Region. How was this objective concretised at the project level? How does the development of participation tie into this objective?
- Is the theme of participation important in the context of urban policy/ in the Urban Programme?

The general development of the Helsinki Region and participation

- Views on the development of the urban/ metropolitan policy of the region

(More detailed questions if needed: What is the most important level of participation –municipality, neighbourhood, metropolitan level? Is there a need for metropolitan forms of participation? Are there issues where direct participation is especially suitable? Are programmes and projects a good way to deal with participation (cf. more established institutions and practices)?)

- Views on the development of participation

(More detailed questions if needed: What is the most important level of participation – municipality, neighbourhood, metropolitan level? Is there a need for metropolitan forms of participation? Are there issues where direct participation is especially suitable? Are programmes and projects a good way to deal with participation (cf. more established institutions and practices)?)

Finally

- Is there still something that the interviewee wants to discuss/ was there something essential that was not covered in the interview?